

Animals & Men

The Journal of the Centre for Fortean Zoology



**The Bigfoot Murders; Wolverines
in Wales; Visit to Loch Ness; The
Migo Re-Examined; The
"Waspman of Lancashire" and
more..**

Issue Fifteen

Two Pounds Sterling

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THE GREAT DAYS OF ZOOLOGY ARE NOT DONE...

Dear Friends,

As what is euphemistically known as the 'festive season' approaches we can look back at another year at the CFZ and do what Graham and I irreverently call our "*Ring out the Old Ring in the New bit*". It has been a very strange year - but let's face it, at the Centre for Fortean Zoology, when isn't it?

We spent the first half of the year desperately trying to catch up with the backlog inherited from 1996, but after a (I hope) successfull appearance at the Fortean Times Unconvention in April things actually began to look up for us.

We hear with sadness that our old pal Clinton Keeling has announced that this year's Zoologica Exhibition in Sussex was his last. It was always an entertaining and informative show and we mourn its passing with sadness and regret. We very much doubt whether there will be another event quite like it!

Also on a sad note, regular visitors to us at the CFZ will be sad to hear that 'Harley' the Chinese Blue Magpie had a stroke and died in early October at the age of eight. He was a favourite with all of our visitors who used to feed him mealworms whilst discussing the wide range of peculiar subjects that visitors to our singular establishment always seem to talk about.

On a happier note (present rumoured budget cuts at Channel Four notwithstanding) Graham and I are off to Puerto Rico and Mexico in January in search of the Chupacabras - the fabled (and not so fabled) Goat sucking daemon of Hispanic America. We will be abroad for between three weeks and a month and (again all things being equal) you will be able to see the result on Channel Four's *'To the Ends of the Earth'* in the late spring of next year.

Finally, after several years of promises we now have a place on the Internet courtesy of our old mate David Symons who has set us up a web site. At the moment it is fairly rudimentary but it will get bigger and better as time goes on!

Also, our republication of Tony Shiels's classic books *"The Cantrip Codex"* and *"13"* has finally taken place, and they and the 1998 Yearbook will be available in time for Christmas. I can highly reccomend all three books (but then again I would say that wouldn't I!?)

Thank you to everyone who has supported us through another year (our fourth would you believe?) and together with all the other members of the editorial team I wish you all a happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year!

Best wishes,

Jonathan Downes.



Newsfile

Compiled and collated by **Graham Inglis** with the occasional interjection by **The Editor**.

FOSSILS

Shake Rattle and Roll

Tyrannosaurus Rex shook its victims to death, according to research by the Russian Academy of Sciences. It used the same 'shake feeding' technique used by killer whales, sharks and crocodiles, a fossil expert told a conference - rather than skull battering. The size of their heads and powerful necks was cited as support for the idea. - *Daily Mail 12/9/97*

Only for the Birds?

The discovery of a "wishbone" in the remains of a dinosaur skeleton supports the suggestion that birds are descended from dinosaurs. Scientists from the US Museum of Natural History regard the "wishbone" or furcula, as a key characteristic of modern birds - *Daily Telegraph 2/10/97*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Darren Naish will be exploring the significance of this and other new discoveries in the worlds of dinosaurs in the next issue of 'Animals & Men'.

NO, THEY DIDN'T...

Biologists in the US have said that a comparison of dinosaur claws with bird wings and feet contradicts the theory that birds evolved from small flesh-eating dinosaurs 150 million years ago.

Birds have retained the middle three digits during their evolution while losing the two outer ones - numbers 1 and 5. In dinosaurs, however, it was numbers 4 and 5 that were lost. Researchers at the University of North Carolina identified the respective digit positions on the basis that, in

embryos, the 4th digit (the ring finger in humans) always grows directly in line with a tissue called the primary axis that later forms the bones of the arm.

Their conclusion is that dinosaurs and birds have many similar features and probably share a common ancestor - but we have yet to find its fossils - *New Scientist 1/11/97*

SNAKE 'MISSING LINK'

Researchers are setting out to prove that snakes descended from giant sea monsters. Michael Caldwell (University of Alberta) and Michael Lee (University of Sydney) say a 97 million-year-old marine fossil from Israel is a metre-long snake with tiny hind legs that evolved directly from sea lizards called mosasaurs. Caldwell said, "We're testing a scenario that has snakes coming from the land and into the water and somewhere in the process losing their limbs, going back onto the land and specialising into a wide number of forms - and in some case going back into the water again, as in the case of sea snakes." - *The Toronto Star May 97.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Darren Naish will be investigating 'snakes with legs' in the next issue of 'Animals & Men'.

OLD CROC

The skeleton of what is believed to be the world's largest marine crocodile is to go on display at Birmingham Museum after 2000 man-hours was spent piecing its 250 bones together. The original finder gave up hope of reassembling the beast and dumped it in cardboard boxes in his garage.

The skeleton bears scars and bite marks from an underwater battle with a *Liopleurodon* (a pliosaur) during the Jurassic era (165 million years ago) and has an imbedded tooth in a hind leg bone. The remains were found in Cheshire six years ago - *Aberdeen Press & Journal 20/5/97*

MAN BEASTS AND BHM

ORANG PENDEK 'MISSING LINK'?

The search is on for the "missing link" - in Sumatra,



Indonesia, following recent reports of an orange coloured primate known as the orang pendek, that strides confidently on two legs. Reports of such a creature have occurred throughout the last 80 years. A research team has brought back hair and droppings samples, although the hair was not collected directly from the animal. These, and casts of footprints, have been passed to the Institute of Zoology in London for analysis - but the Institute needs £15,000 before they can 'afford' to examine the material.

It is currently suggested that it's a new species of orang-utan or gibbon or even a great ape, or just possibly a primitive humanoid. If the latter, it could possibly cast doubt on current evolutionary theories which suggest humans evolved from African apes.

Its habitat, in central Sumatra, is currently under threat from vast forest fires originally started by timber companies - *The Sunday Times* 12/10/97

EDITOR'S NOTE: We have been aware of these alleged Orang Pendek photographs for the best part of a year, but to date, apart from one extremely poor photocopy shown to us by a source within the BBC (who must remain anonymous) we have been unable to see the originals. The picture we saw looked like a poor quality snapshot of a siamang taken from a long distance away and is hardly conclusive evidence one way or another.

For copyright reasons (even the Copyright Liberation Front prefers to leave Mr Murdoch's News International Ltd. alone) we are unable to

print the photograph of the footprint shown in the Sunday Times but we would like to point out the similarities between the photograph they used and the drawings included in Heuvelmans's classic "On the Track of Unknown Animals", which also depict prints allegedly made by the Sumatran man-beast.

NEW AND REDISCOVERED SPECIES



ELECTRIC WARRIOR

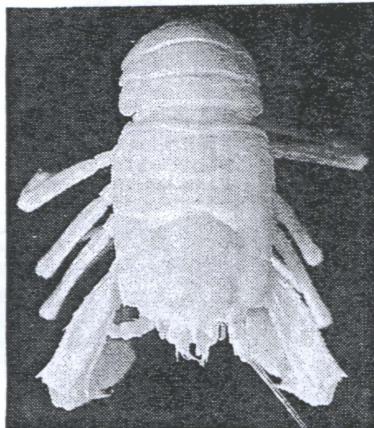
A young girl died after being zapped by a new breed of electric eel in Brazil's Amazon estuary. The eel can deliver 650 volts into the water - *The Sun* 19/9/97

NEVER MIND THE BALAERICS

A 'lost world' has been discovered underneath the island of Majorca by workmen boring a sewage disposal sump. A partially-flooded and light-free cavern that has been undisturbed for millions of years, is home to rare worms, sea lice, shrimps, crabs and new species of crustaceans never before seen. The cavern has no direct connection with the sea - the water percolates through porous rocks.

All the creatures are blind and find their food by homing in on chemical signals. Some have been described as living fossils. Some are similar to creatures found in other 'lost world' caverns in the Bahamas and the Galapagos Islands and it has been suggested these species evolved at the bottom of the ocean millions of years ago, when the caves were close to each other and before becoming separated by continental drift.

Prof Boxshall of the Natural History Museum in London, who has swum through the cavern, said, "Scientists have been amazed at the high levels of diversity found. Just dealing with the crustaceans, these caves are home to countless new species, numerous new genera, many new families, new orders, and even a new class."



A Blind White Crab from the Majorcan caves

(Picture courtesy the Copyright Liberation Front)

The Spanish government intends to make the cave a protected nature reserve. However, most aquatic cave habitats on Majorca are currently under threat because of over-extraction of fresh water for the tourist industry - *Daily Mail* 10/9/97

TAZZIE COME HOME!

As has been commented on widely in the fortean press it is now believed that the Tasmanian wolf (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*), believed extinct, may have survived in Irian Jaya in Indonesia. Several farmers have described how the animal attacked and killed pigs and goats. A new development to the

story is, however, the local government has offered a bounty of \$700 for the capture of one - *Westfalenpost* 22/8/97 (from the *Indonesian Observer*)

Legendary Amazon Forest Monster

600 people from Nuevo Tacna, northern Brazil, at a soccer match, reportedly saw a monster 40 metres long emerge from a forest, looking "like a giant snake, with ears about a metre in length and two aerials [antennae] like elephant trunks." Local reporter Inuma Lavi said, "While the match was going on, the earth shook, the sky got dark and the wind started blowing."

The animal reportedly destroyed a dozen trees and the area looked as if it had been run over by a bulldozer. The Navy despatched a gunship to inspect the nearby shoreline and also sent helicopters. The locals don't want the military to leave, fearing that Sachamama could return and destroy their homes. The authorities have now started an investigation.

An old legend among the Indians tells of the existence of a giant animal, "Sachamama", that hides in the Amazon and seldom emerges, and sleeps for 10 to 30 years under water. - *De Telegraaf* (Netherlands) Aug 97 and *Kolner Express* (Germany) 23/8/97.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The latter paper said the event occurred in northern Peru, not Brazil. This entity would seem to be a cryptid (if indeed cryptid it be) we have never heard of! Anyone got any additional information on it?

NOT ANOTHER ONE?

Scientists have discovered a new species of deer in the remote jungles of Viet Nam. Its height is estimated at only 0.5 m (20 in) as living specimens have not yet been obtained.

The information is based on the skulls of animals hunted by locals for food - *Westfalenpost* (Germany) 23/8/97

FOUR FROGS FOR CHRISTINE

An amateur naturalist who gave up his job, possessions and savings to go frog-hunting in Africa has discovered four new species of reed frog. Martin Pickersgill set off on a 10-month trek from Cape Town to northern Africa. His girlfriend Christine stayed behind and processed the scores of

photos that he sent back. He said, "It was a choice between Christine and the frogs and I chose the frogs." *The Times* 5/6/97

Many of the pets bounded to freedom but would usually die because of the cold and wet weather. Wallabies come from arid semi-desert areas.

MORE MONKEY BUSINESS

A Dutch scientist has discovered a previously unknown species of monkey in a shelter for orphaned monkeys in Brazil. It is only 10 cm tall and weighs 160 grams. The fur is greenish-grey, the face is surrounded by white hair, and the tail is black. The monkey, which belongs to the Sagu family of monkeys, has temporarily been named 'pygmy sagu'. *Westfalenpost (Germany)* 22/8/97



Picture courtesy of the Copyright Liberation Front

OUT OF PLACE

Unidentified Hopping Objects

As British cryptozoologists have known for years red-necked wallabies are fast becoming an established member of the British fauna. Wallabies were first introduced to Britain as a curiosity before the last war but many more were imported in the 1960s after the success of the TV show *Skippy*, about a bush kangaroo which helped solve crimes.

Now, though, colonies numbering up to 120 are scattered throughout Britain - and even in the Isle of Man. Colonies have been reported in the New Forest and Kent, further north in the Tyneside area - and even as far north as Loch Lomond, near Glasgow in Scotland. One wildlife expert said, "Their success indicates how much the British climate has changed in the past few years." Wallaby-bashing parties, where people go out to shoot them for fun, have been reported in the Derbyshire Peak District - *The Sunday Times* 4/5/97

EDITOR'S NOTE: Whilst most of the 'hopping' animals reported across the UK, and indeed western Europe are probably Red Necked Wallabies there have been occasional reports of larger marsupials such as the Red Kangaroo reported at Totnes in Devon during the mid 1980s. This report was never verified and could just have been one of the local wallabies with a reddish-brown tinge to its pelage. Kangaroos do, however, occasionally escape, which brings us neatly onto our next item...

TOUGHER THAN TYSON

The public has been warned not to approach two kangaroos who ran off from a travelling circus in Poland. "The animals have been taught to box and can be violent if people approach," said a police spokesman. The kangaroos are called Gin and Tonic, and Gin is said to have a terrific right hook - *London Evening Standard* 25/7/97



WHITE POWER

An albino starling in Chester has surprised experts by being accepted by the rest of his flock, instead of being shunned or driven out - *Daily Mail* 31/7/97

RARE BIRDS SANCTUARY

Devon birdwatcher Geoffrey Gush's garden is home to the richest collection of native wild birds in any British garden, says the British Trust for Ornithology. Mr Gush has recorded seeing 117 species over the last 25 years, at his home near Ottery St Mary. "The rarest birds I have seen are the toad lark, the Richard's pipit and the waxwing," he said. He puts out many sorts of food, including meat bones, peanut granules, bits of cheese, cake, and fruit. - *Express & Echo (Exeter)* 29/10/97

GOAT RUSTLERS

Dozens of goats have disappeared from a wild herd that has roamed Exmoor for more than a century. The number of goats living near Lynton (west of Minehead) has fallen from 108 in June to just 41. Although some have been shot for straying onto private land, it has been claimed that rustlers have taken a large number for sale to the Muslim 'halal' meat trade. Some halal butchers will pay around £100 for a goat. It is not a police matter because the goats are not owned by anyone. They were introduced to Exmoor in the early 19th century by farmers - *Daily Telegraph* 10/10/97

SHARK ATTACK?

Swimmer Jenny Pickles described how she was savaged by a shark - in a water reservoir in Surrey. "This huge mouth grabbed hold of my foot ... I kicked at it with my other foot and it swam off." A marine biology student who was at the lake said the teeth marks were too big for a pike, and consulted experts. They suggested it was a shark that had been bought as a pet and then dumped in the reservoir at West Molesley, south east of Heathrow Airport - *The Sun* 16/8/97

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although there are sharks which can live in fresh water, most notably the Bull Shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*) and the various species of river sharks discussed in the last issue of *Animals & Men*, I would be extremely surprised if any of these species were available as pets, or indeed if they were, would survive in a reservoir in the home counties. The Bull shark grows up to 3.4m in length and has a reputation for ferocity.

Although there are a few species of shark that can occasionally be found for sale in aquarists shops, they are much smaller and placid creatures. Until more information comes to light this story must remain a mystery.

HERE KITTY KITTY

Fudge, a 6-month-old ginger and white kitten, was rescued from near the top of a 2593 ft Lake District peak. He was found by a climber, cold and close to death, and brought down to safety. Two hours later, he was safely back home - *Daily Mail* 24/9/97

SUPER WASP

"Super wasp" *Dolichovespula media*, a large and aggressive European wasp, has started to spread across Britain. Recent trends towards warm summers and mild winters are thought to be responsible. Experts say the "invader" wasp is migrating northwards by 50 km per year and that even more exotic species could soon follow. Already, a poisonous spider, *Steatoda nobilis*, which came over from the Canary Islands (probably in a consignment of fruit) has readily adapted to conditions in Britain. Its bite is more painful than that of a wasp - *Dail Mail* 17/9/97

MYSTERY CATS



Sussex.

Police officers, some armed, closed in on what was thought to be an escaped puma in a Sussex village. Mr Young, an electrician, was working at a pub in East Wittering when he reported a large beast near some trees. As eight police officers surrounded the copse, out stalked a startled black moggy. Mr Young insisted that he'd seen a puma - *Daily Mail* 10/4/97

Scotland

A report of a big cat in Stonehaven sparked a hunt after a 53-year-old school teacher, Mr Anderson, said he saw a panther-like creature on the perimeter of his school playing fields. He was about 60 m away at the time. He said it had a large head, a shiny sleek black body and a long tail, and described how it jumped a 4 ft (1.2 m) fence - "When it jumped, it did so in a cat-like manner: going back on its haunches before leaping." Police searched the area but found nothing. A police spokesman said that, until the creature is sighted again, there is not much that they can do. "If we could identify and pinpoint it, we could take some action." - *Evening Express (Aberdeen)* 17/10/97.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The possible action that the police could take was not specified.

LAKE AND SEA MONSTERS

Loch Lochy, Scotland's third-deepest loch, is being 'swept' by sonar equipment and divers in search of underwater caves or rock overhangs which could house the loch's mysterious resident monster, known by the nickname of *Lizzie*. *Press & Journal (Aberdeen)* 28/7/97

OTHER STORIES

IGUANA RESCUE 1

Firefighters ripped up floorboards and dismantled part of a wall to save Basil the iguana, who escaped from his cage and disappeared behind his owner's

bath. The Leicestershire fire brigade were called after the iguana had been away from his heat lamp for 36 hours. Sensitive sound-detecting equipment was used to locate Basil trapped in a wall - *UK Teletext* 18/10/97

IGUANA RESCUE 2

A fire crew turned out in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, to rescue a 4 ft (1.2 m) iguana which got stuck up her owner's chimney. The crew were warned that pulling on her tail could cause the tail to come off. Attempts to lure the lizard out with her favourite food - a banana - scared her and she disappeared further up. As the fire crew scaled the roof, intending to get the lizard down from the top, she made her own way down to safety - newspaper source unidentified, Aug 97.

EDITORIAL NOTE: I think that it was Charlie F himself who first noted clusters of anomalous activity. To have two iguana rescues within a few months is, whilst neither fortean nor cryptozoological per se, an interesting enough coincidence to be worth noting. Terry Hooper, regular contributor to A&M and the founder of the Exotic Animals Register has several records of escaped iguanas from all over the UK in recent months. This is indicative of several things. Firstly, as any amateur herpetologist will tell you iguanas and their relatives are great 'escape artists' and will often disappear from the most securely sealed vivarium, and secondly, as 'exotic' pets become more fashionable and easy to obtain, some people are, no doubt, getting bored with their pets and releasing them into the wild to fend for themselves. This is both cruel and stupid, and we must commend the work of organisations like Proteus Reptile Rescue for their sterling service in capturing abandoned creatures of this type.

Whilst on the subject of 'clusters' of anomalous stories, we have recently received a number of tales on the subject of squirrels...

COME ON PUNK MAKE MY DAY

A vengeful squirrel's aggressive quest for food in Camden has been ended - but only after six people were left in need of medical treatment. The grey squirrel was described by a councillor as "demanding food with menaces" after biting several people in their gardens.

The squirrel's quest for food led him to attack a workman armed with a shovel. It scratched him

and so he flattened it with the shovel - London Evening Standard 25/7/97

KINGS OF SPEED

A squirrel was caught by a roadside camera speed trap in Fife, Scotland. Technicians said the racing rodent would have had to reach around 43 mph to have triggered the camera. A local RSPCA inspector said that this particular speedster must be the squirrel world's equivalent of Linford Christie. English Nature mammal ecologist Tony Mitchell-Jones said, "It certainly sounds ludicrous to me. I suspect there is a fault with the camera. If I were a motorist caught on that particular stretch, I might be asking questions about its accuracy."

Scotland has another type of super squirrel, however: a new generation of tough red squirrels that have successfully resisted the advance of the bigger and more aggressive greys. It is thought that the top speed of the 'super red' is about 20 mph in short bursts - Daily Mail 22/9/97

EDITOR'S NOTE: The original newspaper story concerning this speedy rodent described it as a 'Flying Squirrel' (presumably because of its remarkable burst of speed). It was (of course) no such thing, but merely a specimen of *S.carolinensis* with what an old lady of my acquaintance describes as 'the wind in its tail'.

GLOW WORMS

The increase in urban "light pollution" is being blamed for the decline of the British glow-worm. Researchers suggest that the male insects, which are attracted to the females by their glowing bodies, are no longer able to see potential mates, due to urban sprawl and road lighting - The Times 1/7/97

EDITORIAL NOTE: The 'clusters' keep on coming folks! Herewith a trio of weird elephant stories...

PENSION RIGHTS FOR ELEPHANTS

Elephants working in the forest reserves of West Bengal are to be given pension rights by the provincial government. A forest department spokesman said staff elephants over 65 years old will be given good food, shelter and health care facilities - instead of being sent back to the jungle, or destroyed. Special points such as good behaviour would also be noted - BBC Ceefax 28/10/97

FUNKY DUNG

More than 40 firefighters were called to a zoo after a pile of elephant dung caught fire at Howlett's Animal Park in Canterbury - UK Teletext 4/10/97

SEXY ELEPHANTS

Female elephants on heat can be heard by potential mates up to two miles away, using low frequency rumbles below the range of most humans' hearing. Dr Langbauer of Pittsburg Zoo, USA, said, "When the males hear the call they immediately stop what they are doing and head towards the female. They are completely silent - which isn't surprising. The females are sexually receptive for only four days every four years, so the males don't want to advertise to rivals that they are on their way."

Scientists have also revealed that male haddocks have a secret courtship ritual: they make thumping noises similar to the sound of a revving motorbike - Daily Mail 13/9/97



EDITOR'S NOTE: This is certainly an issue full of 'clusters' on quasi-anomalous stories. One of the strands in this issue is Bees and Wasps.

As well as the Waspman of Lancashire (see Newsfile Extra) and the 'Super Wasp' described above (Out of Place) we start our miscellany of uncategorisable stories with a few close encounters of the buzzing kind...

I'M A KING BEE

The mystery of honey bee communication may have been solved. It has been known since 1946 that bees use a complicated dance to pass on directions to sources of nectar. But in the darkness of a hive, bees are unable to see each other. Scientists now believe bees use their antennae and hairs to detect tiny air movements caused by a 'dancing' bee. Professor Michelson of Denmark tested his theory with a tiny robotic bee connected to a computer, and miniature microphones in a hive. "When we brought it into the hive and made it dance, a number of the bees obeyed the instructions given by the dancer," he said. "For example, they would fly 500 metres to the south if we told them to."

He discovered that the bees were sending out waves of air pressure over short distances. The turbulence a fraction of an inch from the bee is equivalent to standing 60 ft (15 m) from a jumbo jet as it takes off - Daily Telegraph/Daily Mail 13/9/97

EDITORIAL NOTE: "I'm a King Bee" is an old blues song by (I think) Sonny Boy Williamson, but whose first band was called "The King Bees"? The first person to telephone me with the answer wins a free four issue subscription to this superlative publication...

SEARCH-AND-DESTROY WASPS

Hertfordshire scientists are training a posse of hunter-killer wasps to tackle aphids, a pest that attacks crops. The wasp, *Aphidius ervi*, which is a quarter of the size of the common British wasp, uses aphids as incubators for its eggs.

The wasps can detect volatile chemicals given off by plants when attacked, and are being put through a training program to enhance the association of the chemical smell with the presence of aphids. Untrained wasps are relatively sluggish in their response.

The hunter-killer wasps are intended for use in greenhouses. Outdoors, it is estimated that aphids cause damage costing £100 million to crops in Britain and a genetic engineering solution is being sought as an alternative to pesticides - The Observer 14/9/97

TEARS OF A CLONE

Leaders of 40 nations at a Council of Europe summit in Strasbourg have pledged to ban human cloning. The summit examined various human rights and social issues. A protocol on cloning will be submitted to the European Convention on Biomedicine in a bid to guard against misuse of medical advances - BBC Ceefax / UK Teletext 11/10/97

CLONE ALONE

Meanwhile, Dolly the cloned sheep is to be put through a breeding programme to see how fertile she is, and whether any effects from her unusual origin can be traced in her descendants. And Polly, another cloned sheep at the Edinburgh institute, will also be bred. She contains human genetic material and scientists want to see if these genes carry on down the generations - Daily Telegraph 22/9/97

MARINE TOOL USE

US Researchers believe dolphins have been seen using tools to find food and for defence. Five female bottle-nosed dolphins were observed in a Western Australian bay carrying sponges on the tips of their snouts as they searched for food on the seabed. It has been suggested the sponges were being used as protection against the spines and stings of animals like stingrays and stonefish, and also to rake up prey - Press & Journal (Aberdeen) 26/7/97

SEAHORSE BREEDING

Scottish marine experts have bred the world's biggest seahorses for the first time in Britain. The captive breeding programme will eventually see seahorses returned to the wild in oceans where they are under threat - millions are killed each year and exported to China and Japan, where they are ground up for 'medicinal' use - Press & Journal (Aberdeen) 29/8/97

HIGH-JUMP CONTEST

A high-jump competition was arranged by animal behaviour scientists in New Zealand who wanted to determine how high and wide a bird sanctuary barrier should be. Stoats performed the best. The results were:

Stoats	1.9 m
Ships' rats	1.7 m
Feral cats	1.5 m

Feral cats 1.5 m
Wild Possums 1.2 m
Ferrets 0.5 m
Mice 0.33 m

Another test compared tunnelling animals - a challenge won by a Norway rat, which dug a length of 0.6 m in the time limit - *Independent Aug 97*.

SECRET LIFE OF THE DEEP-SEA SHRIMP

The natural behaviour of deep-sea shrimps that swarm around volcanic springs on the ocean floor may be hard to determine, Jon Copley of University of Southampton says.

Although described as eyeless when they were discovered a decade ago, the shrimps in fact have an unusual "eye" in the form of a heat-detecting organ on their backs.

The bright lights of deep-diving submersibles would almost certainly dazzle the shrimps - and possibly modify their behaviour while being observed.

The idea that an observer's act of observing interferes with the behaviour of the object being observed is a familiar one in quantum physics.

"I want to find out more about the lives of shrimps at hot springs," Copley says, *"simply because they are there - and because, like quarks and quasars, they do not always give up their secrets easily..."* - *New Scientist "Forum" 1/11/97*

OIL RIG SAFE HAVENS

Endangered fish are finding safe haven among abandoned oil rigs, fishermen have claimed. Fishing is banned within 500 yards (400 m) of an oil rig and population 'hot spots' of fish have now been reported in these areas.

Environmentalists have been criticised for ignoring the effect of oil rig 'safe havens' on fish stocks and for calling for the disposal of these decommissioned rigs - *Daily Telegraph 7/9/97*

EL NINO

The El Nino effect, a largely-unpredictable lurch in oceanic and meteorological conditions, is predicted to peak in early 1998 and leave droughts and floods in its wake. The last El Nino, in 1982-83, was regarded as the most destructive weather event in modern history.

The event appears to be becoming both stronger and more frequent. The cause of it is as yet unknown, although some scientists suspect that it is linked to global warming - *Daily Mail 19/9/97*

WHALING

This years' International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting, held in Monaco in late October, has ended without agreement over whether commercial whale-killing should resume.

As usual, Japan and Norway want to continue to kill whales for "scientific" purposes - *New Scientist 1/11/97*

KNOCK-ON EFFECTS OF GENETIC ENGINEERING

Genetic manipulation of plants has affected ladybirds and radishes, British researchers have found. Potatoes engineered to resist attack by aphids can harm ladybirds, the pest's natural predator. And genes for herbicide-resistance, spliced into oilseed rape, can 'spill over' into adjacent wild radish plants and persist for several generations.

The rape/radish hybrids had variable numbers of chromosomes but no stable varieties were found.

Experts say that neither finding poses a major environmental threat - *New Scientist 1/11/97*

Contributors:

Tom Anderson, The Cryptic Clipper of
Mannic Publications,
Lionel Beer, Ade Dimmick, Hermann
Reichenbach, Wolfgang Schmidt.

Please mark your clippings with *your* name, the name of the publication in which it appeared and the date of publication.

The Waspman Cometh

by James Lister

A fascinating report which seemed almost too good to be true surfaced on the Preston local radio station on Thursday, August 21st 1997.

The DJ spoke gravely of a man-sized yellow and black flying insect which displayed prominent humanoid characteristics and was apparently abducting domestic pets, and terrorising the residents of Walton-le-dale, a suburb of the town.

No attempt at elucidation was provided as to what this creature may have been; but this investigator's appetite was thoroughly whetted!

But, as someone once said, nothing odd will remain odd for long. In reality the case was interesting, although not quite as engaging as I had at first supposed.

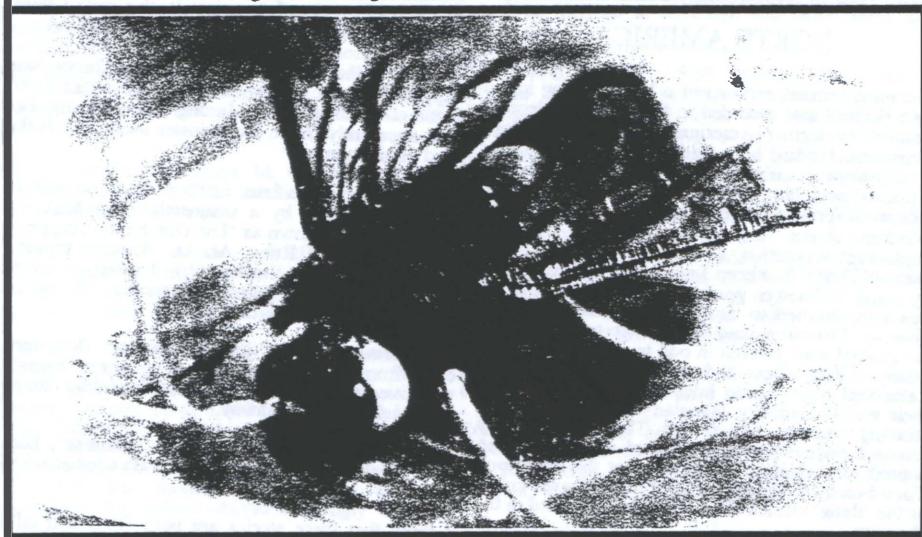
The 'mansized' insect was just two and a half inches long (fairly short for any human!), did not possess any human features, nor was it involved in the aforementioned abducting or terrorising.

It was captured on August 20th in a garden in Walton-le-dale by two men after it had 'swooped' down on them! One can safely assume that the DJ had been using a liberal dose of artistic license when referring to her 'waspman'.

In British creepy-crawly terms, however, such a length is uncommon but I fear that the creature in question is nothing more than a very large specimen of the British Woodwasp (or Horntail - so named because of the female's noticeable ovipositor), which is not unheard of on new housing estates.

There could be a mystery here, as the two men who captured it, having consulted a book on entomology, identified the creature as a Scandinavian Woodwasp; therefore making it, to a certain extent at least, an 'out of place' animal. Nothing appeals more to a fortean sensibility than the classic juxtapositioning of exotic zoology and middle class suburbia, but there is a nagging doubt that this one could be explainable - I am hoping that someone more versed in comparative entomology than I will be able to make a definitive identification of the creature.

Some forteans will not want to discount the DJ's original news report (I among them), perhaps she was telling the truth after all, and actually alluding to another, completely separate entity. Who knows? The Waspman of Walton-le-dale sounds interesting... Owlman and Mothman hunters take note!



The Bigfoot Murders

by Richard Freeman

The prevailing view of Bigfoot, the Yeti and their relatives around the world is one of timid, retiring creatures, gentle despite their size and immense strength. Yet, there are those who question this assumption. These are wild animals and as such are unpredictable. The Gorilla is a peacable animal, but the Chimpanzee - another ape - is one of the most savage of all primates.

Those who question Bigfoot's temperament, pose some unnerving questions. Many people have vanished without trace in America's forested North West, and in the bleak Himalayas. Did the lost hikers merely lose their way and die? Did the missing mountaineers really fall down a crevasse? The actual accounts of Bigfoot/Yeti attacks are extremely rare, but they do exist within the literature on the subject.

In this article I will examine each in turn and see whether there is any substance to this slur on the name of one of cryptozoology's most famous icons.

NORTH AMERICA

The most famous account of a human being killed by a Bigfoot was recorded in the book 'Wilderness Hunter' by former American President Theodore Roosevelt. He had been told this story in 1892 by an old trapper called Bauman. Fifty years before Bauman and his partner were trapping in the Bitterroot mountains between the Salmon and the Wisdom rivers in Idaho. This area had an unpleasant reputation, as a year before a trapper named 'Cluby' had been found dead and half eaten by some 'unknown' predator. On the first day, the pair had returned to their camp to find it in total disarray. Provisions and packs were torn apart and the ground was covered in odd tracks. The trappers assumed that a bear had visited in their absence. Later that night, some huge animal smashed into their stand-to shelter. Bauman took a shot at the stinking creature, but missed. The next day they returned once more to a wrecked camp. The men waited up that night ready to shoot the interloper. They heard its "harsh, grating, long-drawn cries" as the 'thing' circled their camp but remained in the shadows.

This all proved too much for the men, who decided to leave.

Bauman left to collect Beaver traps whilst his companion packed up the camp. Returning at dusk, Bauman again came upon a destroyed camp and he became understandably nervous when his friend did not answer his call. Bauman found his friend's body near a spruce log. His neck was broken and four huge fang marks lay deep in his throat. The carcass had not been eaten but had been thrown about like a toy and rolled over many times like a dog. Bauman grabbed his rifle and fled on horseback, riding through the night until he was clear of the forest. He remained deeply effected all his life and never returned to the Bitterroot woods.

There is no evidence that this story, which admittedly sounds like something out of a Hammer Horror movie had anything whatsoever to do with a Sasquatch. Bauman did not see the beats but only smelt and heard it! Even if a Bigfoot did visit the camp who is to say that it was the same creature that killed Bauman's friend? The fang marks and the fact that the body was tossed about point to a bear attack! Bears are well known, nay infamous raiders of campsites...

EDITOR'S NOTE: As anyone who has ever watched Yogi Bear cartoons will tell you...

Roosevelt had been told several tales of hairy giants in the backwoods of America. In this case I think that he put two and two together and made five!

In 1920, Albert Petka, of Nulato, Alaska, was supposedly attacked by a 'Bushman'. Petka lived alone on his boat with only dogs for company. His pets apparently drove the monster away, but Petka died of his injuries.

Twenty-three years later another man was said to have been killed by a sasquatch. John Mire (or McQuire) also known as 'The Dutchman' staggered into the town of Ruby, Alaska, claiming to have been attacked by a 'Bushman' in his remote cabin. Mire's dogs, also chased the attacker off, but he later died of internal bleeding.

Those two cases are just too similar! Both men came from Alaska. Both men were virtual hermits who lived alone. Both had gallant dogs who chased the attacking Bigfoot away.

Both refer to the 'creature' as a 'Bushman'. Both men die shortly after telling the locals what attacked them.

I think that these stories are both fabricated tales

similar to contemporary urban myths. They surface every few years and have no basis in reality! We will see similar examples in Asia!

Finally, there is an obscure case mentioned in John Green's "Sasquatch - The Apes Among Us". Two security guards were once found dead. Apparently they had been picked up and dashed against the ground like dolls. Huge footprints were found in the area. Obviously 'Bigfoot' was to blame. As it turned out, however, no such thing ever happened! One man had died from a stab wound and the other from a bullet. Exit Bigfoot (who is not noted for 'packing a piece')!

SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA.

In the early part of this century, French naturalist Frank Blaucaneaux, the author of a book called 'Biologica Americana Centrale', was travelling through the Honduras with his negro servant, when they arrived at the headwaters of the Rio Mopan. The two decided to rest in a shady hollow dominated by a huge palm tree surrounded by long grass. As they prepared for their siesta the palm began to shake as if some huge creature were trying to loosen nuts growing high in the tree above them.

The Frenchman instructed his servant Miguel to look for the cause of the disturbance. Miguel became very agitated saying that it was 'a devil'. Blaucaneaux scoffed at the idea and insisted that his servant do his bidding!

Taking up a rifle, the unfortunate Miguel sallied forth. Shortly his agonised screams rent the air, followed by the sound of awful moans. Blaucaneaux ran to the aid of his servant. The man was lying beneath the palm tree with deep gashes across his face and body. His stomach was ripped open, and his entrails hung out! before he died, he told Blaucaneaux that a 'black devil' had torn him apart and then left for the forest. The Frenchman buried the body of his ill-fated servant beneath the palm tree and then attempted to follow the tracks of the beast. He followed the trail of broken twigs and bent branches for about five miles until he came upon some limestone crags.

Here, the thing had apparently entered a dried up stream bed and overturned some boulders. He followed the trail to a cave in the crags, where he found what appeared to be a handprint in the soft, white mud of the floor of the cave. It resembled a human thumb and two fingers, but all three digits bore huge claws. At this point Blaucaneaux's nerve

gave out and he beat a hasty retreat.

Some time later he tried to enlist the help of the local Amerindian population in helping him to smoke the beast out of the cave, but they would have none of it and refused point blank.

Once again we do not actually have a description of anything which is identifiably a giant primate. 'Black Devil' could mean almost anything from a mad native to a melanistic jaguar. According to orthodox zoological belief there are not supposed to be any higher primates other than man in Central and South America (nor North America for that matter). A particularly curious thing about this report is the 'hand print'. All monkeys and apes have five digits, rather than three, and they have fingernails rather than the 'huge claws' described by Blaucaneaux. Surely, if a giant ape wanted to kill someone, it would bludgeon them to death with its fists, or even with a branch or a rock. The slashes on Miguel which are presumably claw marks sound like something very different.

Some authorities believe that the reports of giant, hairy brutes in central and south America do not refer to primates at all, and are therefore nothing at all to do with Bigfoot, Sasquatch and their relatives in the BHM community. It has been suggested that these animals are a surviving form of Mylodon, a medium sized giant ground sloth. These were about the size of a brown bear and had skin studded with armour like bony nodules which provided protection to the whole of its body apart from the belly. Even today there are South American tribes who speak of such an animal, invulnerable apart from the belly. Mylodons possessed large, scythe-like claws for ripping down plants and for self-defence. The creature that attacked Miguel (if, indeed this is not just another traveller's yarn), sounds that it could indeed have been a Mylodon. Although we know that these animals were herbivorous we have no inkling of their temperament!

Italian archaeologist Pino Turolla was told a strange and bloody tale by an Indian guide in Venezuela. Antonio, the man in question, had gone with his two sons to the Pacaraima range. As they approached the savannah, they encountered what Antonio describes as huge lumbering beasts with smallish heads and very long arms. Three of these monsters set upon the men with clubs killing Antonio's younger son!

At first this seems like a convincing tale. Why would the old man make up such a gruesome story about the death of his own son?

However, there are a number of sequels to this story, which cause me to seriously doubt Turolla's word!

Six months after hearing the story Turolla returned to Venezuela and persuaded the guide and some fellow Indians to take him to where the attack took place, shrill, lion-like roars terrified the Indians who would go no further. The Italian pressed on and glimpsed what he described as two blurred shadows six to eight feet tall pressed against some rocks. He said that they were erect and ape-like but that the 'creatures' vanished into the dusk.

Turolla was carrying the photograph of an 'ape' which had been taken by Francois de Loys in 1920. Turolla said that the creatures strongly resembled those in De Loys's photograph. In fact all that this famous photograph shows is a large female red faced spider monkey. The forward facing nostrils, vestigial thumbs and large exterior clitoris all identify this species plainly. This infamous photograph has been shown up as one of the most feeble hoaxes in cryptozoological history. Turolla's mention of it does not bode well for his credibility.

Turolla returned in 1970 on an expedition to the Guacamayo range near the Chancis river in Ecuador. Turolla said that he, and his South American companion had been given the location of a certain cave in the mountains by an Indian shaman. In this cave he was assured that he would find evidence to support his theories on the beginnings of South American culture. The cave, when they reached it, appeared to be man-made. After wandering by torchlight about a hundred and fifty feet into the cave, the men heard a terrifying roar that Turolla recognised as being the same that he had heard years earlier in Venezuela.

Something began to hurl huge rocks at the men who ran in terror towards the mouth of the cave. On reaching the daylight they found that the Indian's hair had turned white and that Turolla himself was clutching a strange object - a tiny ancient carving of a human face on an axe head!

The whole account sounds like something out of a 'pulp' story from 'The Boy's Own Paper' in about 1920! I don't believe a word of this tall tale, and I also think that the killer-ape story was a total fabrication!

EDITOR'S NOTE: I would just like to stress (having been threatened with libel actions twice during the lifetime of this magazine, that if Turolla, his heirs, publishers or anyone else reads this, that opinions expressed are those of Richard Freeman himself and nowt to do with the rest of us innocent bystanders. It must be

said, however, that on the face of it the story does seem a leeeeetle unlikely (to say the least). For more details on the discreditation (if that is the right word, which it probably isn't) of the *Ameranthropoides loysi* picture I refer you to the in depth article by Loren Coleman in issue four of *The Anomalist*.

ASIA

In parts of the Himalayas, the Yeti is greatly feared. In fact, one of the first things that children are taught is that if a male Yeti chases you, one has to run uphill on account of the heavy brow which blocks the he-Yeti's view. A female Yeti finds it equally hard to run downhill due to her pendulous breasts.

In 1949, a Sherpa herdsman called Lakmpa Tenzing was reportedly torn to shreds by a Yeti in a remote pass in Nangaparbay. Details on this are, however, scant. No-one seems to know whether or not there were any witnesses. The Himalayan Black Bear, a highly aggressive species inhabits this area. Could such a bear have been the true culprit?

Of course, it is much more exciting to suppose that the luckless fellow had been killed by the mysterious man-beast of the mountains, instead of by anything as mundane as a bear!

Oddly, in other Himalayan areas the Yeti is not at all feared, and is known as an unaggressive creature, harmless unless provoked.

The 1949 case is the only reported killing that I have been able to unearth from Asia. This seems strange as it is not only the world's largest continent but in many areas it is riddled with superstition.

Perhaps, however, this is a pointer towards the TRUE nature of these animals.

I can vaguely remember having read a story of a number of soldiers having been killed and eaten by a huge Yeti somewhere in the Himalayas. The creature was subsequently shot. I cannot remember where I read this unlikely tale and I have not been able to find it again.

This story sounds remarkably like the accounts of the troll 'Grendel' in the poetic saga of 'Beowulf', where the monster eats men one by one as they slept together in a great hall. If the Yeti was a man-eating carnivore it would surely take just one victim at a time, and would be unlikely to attack a whole group of men. If anyone can remember the source of this seemingly silly tale I would be very grateful to know.

EDITOR'S NOTE: With shades of the now infamous 'Thunderbird Photograph' I remember having read this story somewhere, but like Richard, I have no idea where. I seem to remember, however, that it was in a fairly sensationalised book about Central Asia rather than in a mainstream cryptozoological volume!

AFRICA

The darkest continent is strangely lacking in man-beast reports. After giving us the original man-beast, the once legendary Gorilla, things have been very quiet. Most African man-beasts are tiny creatures, seemingly more akin to the Sumatran Orang Pendek to the monstrous Yeti or Bigfoot. The one exception is the East African Chemosit.

This greatly feared monster is supposed to be able to claw its way through the walls of mud huts to get at its human prey. Some tribespeople wear protective headgear as The Che sit is said to relish human brains obtained by biting through the skull. Although descriptions of this animal vary tribesmen have attributed many deaths to its predations. Some say that it is like an ape, and others that it resembles a bear, hence its common name of the Nandi Bear.

Many theories have been put forward to explain it. These include giant baboons, huge rogue hyenas, surviving chalicotheres (a peculiar clawed ungulate thought long extinct), outwised melanistic honey badgers, or even a hitherto undiscovered species of sub-Saharan bear (the only bear species known from Africa is *Ursos arctos crowtheri* - the Atlas Bear - which is now probably extinct).

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more details on the Chalicotherie theory see Clinton Keeling's article in A&M 6 and for an in-depth look at the Atlas Bear see my article in A&M2.

The closest encounter between a Chemosit and a westerner took place in Kenya and involved Angus McDonald, an expatriot Briton involved in a land development scheme. He and his fellow workers were posted about a hundred miles from any sizeable settlement. They were encamped in temporary huts surrounded by scrubland at an elevation of about 9,000 feet.

One night McDonald was awoken by wild screams and a huge hairy creature lept through the window almost on top of him.

They then engaged in a frantic moonlit chase around the hut, as the evil smelling 'thing' pursued the frightened man who tried to fend it off with

anything that came to hand.

After five frantic minutes, his fellow workers managed to frighten the strange assailant off by banging pots and pans. McDonald described the animal as being seven feet tall with an ape-like head and red mouth, and being greyish-brown in the moonlight.

The next morning the unnerved crew set out to track the beast down with dogs. Its tracks appeared to be roundish and ending in digits. The thing had moved bipedally before going down on all fours to make its escape into the trees around the camp.

Allowing for understandable fear induced exaggeration I believe that I know what attacked McDonald. I believe that it was a large, male Chimpanzee. Chimps are one of the most savage, unpredictable and unpleasant animals known to man...

EDITOR'S NOTE: They ARE our closest relatives...

The public image of these creatures as cute stars of the PG Tips TV commercials could not be further from the truth. The ones used on television to sell tea-bags are juvenile specimens. An adult chimp is three or four times as strong as a man and armed with savage teeth. They have been known to kill people in Africa and maim them in captivity, and they are my least favourite animal of the three hundred plus species of wild creature that I worked with during my time as a Zoo Keeper.

One of my fellow professionals had a finger bitten off in an unprovoked attack and I have heard gruesome tales of others who suffered far more serious wounds.

Chimpanzees are not usually found in Kenya. The st easterly population known is in western Tanzania. They do, however, wander. In August 1959 a surprisingly unaggressive female turned up on the western shore of Malawi's Lake Nyasa and other vagrants are also known.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This animal, which the natives named *Ufifi* (which means 'ghost') was a particularly strange animal. In many ways she seemed more akin to the chimpanzees found in western Africa rather than to other members of the East African population. She was captured in 1964 and sent to Chester Zoo where her health soon deteriorated forcing her to be destroyed. The whole question of Malawi's putative chimpanzee population has remained in abeyance ever since!!

As Bernard Heuvelmans pointed out four decades ago, the Chemosit is undoubtedly a composite animal, and personally I would suggest that large hyenas and wandering chimpanzees are the most significant components.... but no killer African Yetis!

AUSTRALIA

The only placental mammals living in Australia are rodents and bats, and all other non-marsupials were introduced by man! There have never been primates apart from *H. sapiens* there, and certainly no anthropoid apes. It is ironic, therefore, that in this continent where apes have never been reported there are more reports of giant man-beasts than Africa where chimpanzees and gorillas are well known!

Native Australian (Aboriginal) legend is full of tales of these strong smelling, savage horrors, many of them recounting savage battles between man beasts and humans which resulted in men being killed. These tales are not unlike those of many European troll legends, where the humans use their advanced brains to outwit their gigantic adversaries. These antipodean man-beasts are known variously as *Yowies*, *Poolagari*, *Kalkadons*, *Narragum* and *Kraitbull*.

Today these creatures are reported both by the indigenous population and by white men, but they seem less aggressive.

Although there are several reports of unprovoked attacks on humans only one death has been attributed to a yowie in recent times. In 1910, two un-named men were walking in the Victoria Falls area of the Blue Mountains. A three metre (ten foot) tall, upright, gorilla-like creature charged at them from behind some bushes. It was brandishing a large rock. The Yowie hurled the rock at the men smashing the skull of one of them. The other man beat a hasty retreat, but returned the next morning with a party of armed men and dogs. All they could find was bloodstains - the body of his unfortunate companion having been presumably carried away by the creature.

This story is totally unreferenced (like so many killer man-beast accounts) and appears in Rex Gilroy's book 'Mysterious Australia'. This is a book in which Mr Gilroy asks us to believe not only that there are no less than three species/races of Australian Man-Beast but that they share their habitat with living dinosaurs, man-eating plesiosaurs, fifty foot monitor lizards, giant marsupial lions and hidden UFO bases.

It is difficult to reconcile these views with those of mainstream cryptozoology.

The Yowie certainly exists but it is (in my view) almost certainly a zoiform phenomenon rather than a *bona fide* flesh and blood animal.

CONCLUSION.

Most of us have a morbid fascination with murder. The stranger and more savage the killings, the greater the secret appeal that they have to us. This is why we find cannibals and serial killers like Fred West and Ed Gein so intriguing. If an animal looks like a human it also appeals to us. This is why creatures with round faces and big, forward-pointing eyes are the ones which we tend to think of as 'cute'. Chimps, monkeys, pandas, cats, pug-dogs, and bushbabies are all guaranteed to make the public go 'aaah!' This changes when the animal is bigger and stronger than us. African natives believed that Gorillas would fight Elephants, and carry off native girls to rape them. (This is a charge sometimes levelled at the Yeti today). We transpose our darkest crimes onto these hulking monsters. Thick brows, shaggy fur and glowing eyes are seen as symptoms which add up to a killer. Ugly = Evil is a strong concept for 20th Century man. In reality there is not one shred of evidence that these magnificent apes (if apes they are) have ever harmed anyone without being provoked. Some estimate that the Gorilla is twenty times as strong as a man. A large Yeti would be twice as big as a Gorilla and one can easily imagine the murderous strength that it would wield. That it has never turned this hideous strength against man is a testament to its true nature!

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Many congratulations to Richard Freeman from Connie and Raymond Marbles

BEAVER PATROL

EDITOR'S NOTE: As is our custom most issues we present a selection of short articles on different aspects of the same animal. This issue, by popular demand we approach the beaver, and to celebrate we include another in our ongoing series of telephone competitions. To win a free four issue subscription to this august magazine be the first person to telephone me, not only explaining the title of this section but singing the first few lines of the song...



RETURN OF THE BEAVER THE STORY SO FAR

by Tom "don't make any Beaver Jokes" Anderson

Under Article 22 of the E.C.Habitats Directive member states are required to consider the desirability of reintroducing species listed on Annex IV..

"...which are native to their territory (...) where this may contribute to re-establishing the species at a favourable conservation status".

Of the four species listed; the brown bear (*Ursos arctos*), the lynx (*Lynx*), the wolf (*Canis lupus*) and the European Beaver (*Castor fiber*), only the latter was considered by Scottish National Heritage to be appropriate of further investigation in terms

of reintroduction to the Scottish landscape.

This is the first attempt to reintroduce a large animal to the British countryside and is subject both to the feasibility and desirability of its implementation. Prior to its extinction in the 16th Century, the trade in beaver pelts was large enough to support a sizeable export market. Its secondary value was in the salicylic acid derived from the anal scent gland which is, by the way, the main constituent of the drug known today as aspirin.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Possibly that is why certain members of the CFZ investigative team usually need a couple of asprins after a night out looking for beaver...

Already re-established in sixteen countries, its suitability to adapt is second to the availability of sufficient habitat to support a self maintaining population.

The potential disadvantages are their impact on fish stocks, tree felling for food and building, the undermining of ditches and banks, and the flooding and blocking of waterways by damming.

The latter is less of a problem with the Scandinavian sub-species (*C.fiber*) which was chosen as the most suitable to be reintroduced into Poland and which only built dams on 50% of the settlement sites. This is a critical factor as there is concern that damming would impede salmon migration and that bank erosion would damage reeds with silt coverage.

The benefits of restoring elements of native biodiversity such as reducing sediment loads and slowing water flow, the preservation of wetland ecosystems and the stabilisation of groundwater levels constitute the case for the defence.

In Britain its only natural predator would be the fox. In Europe the majority of beaver deaths are attributable to man, including poaching, entanglement in fishing nets and road casualties. The only diseases that beavers carry which are transmittable to other animals are tularemia and rabies, although Canadian animals are thought to spread the water borne disease giardia.

Current research is based on identifying habitat availability and its potential for any releases. Following this will be the more complex investigation of the effect of beaver behaviour on native fish species, in particular those of importance to anglers. This, in Scotland, is likely to be a major hurdle, both politically and economically sensitive.

The study has two years to run following which recommendations will be made to government by S.N.H.

It is not hard to see the potential hazards that will follow any planned reintroduction of a species with (as yet) no cash crop potential like fur farming or hunting. The vagaries of trout and salmon fishing and its value to small rural communities will have the riparian owners lobbying for a quid pro quo to offset any alleged erosion of their interests.

One of the prerequisites of Article 22(A) of the Habitats Directive is that reintroduction may only take place after "proper consultation with the public concerned". The last word should have been omitted. It lays the way open for vested interests to hijack the issue to their own advantage, excusing excessive water abstraction etc.

In the long term the beaver could prove of inestimable value in improving wetland conservation and land management. As the species has a high mobility and would in time colonise south of the border, its future should be seen in a national context.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Tom Anderson also wrote about the reintroduction of this species into

Scotland as part of his contribution to the 1997 CFZ Yearbook where he discussed several species including the lynx and the wolf.

GIANT BEAVERS

by Bill Petrovic

In his excellent (and unfortunately out of print) book "Extraordinary Animals Worldwide" Dr Karl Shuker notes that during the Pleistocene epoch which began about two million years ago, the beaver family included some truly massive species, some the size of bears. The fossil record of animals such as *Amblyrhiza* suggest they were almost totally aquatic. It is assumed that these animals became extinct long before the age of man, but Karl Shuker quotes a fascinating suggestion by researcher Janet Beck, who in 1972 suggested that certain animals referred to in Native American folklore could in fact have been a relict population of these enormous beasts which had survived into prehistoric times, and which had survived in the form of a folk memory amongst the Algonkian Indian tribes.

In an earlier issue of this journal, Canadian cryptozoologist Ben Roesch postulated that giant ground sloths may have existed into historical times in parts of North America, and whilst doing so he discussed quasi-folkloric accounts of 'giant squirrels'.

It is tempting, to wonder whether these accounts might not have been of ground sloths after all but instead were of giant beavers of one of the species thought to be long extinct.

Like so much in contemporary cryptozoology, however, this is probably nothing but wishful thinking!

EDITOR'S NOTE: In another of his fascinating books Dr Shuker also points out that the world's largest species of flea is a parasite found upon an obscure North American rodent called the Mountain Beaver. He also points out that this is a complete misnomer on two counts because the animal is neither a beaver or a resident of mountainous areas.

I included this fascinating vignette, not because it is of any direct importance to the rest of the subjects listed in this section but because for some reason this utterly inappropriate piece of nomenclature has always made me laugh!

MORE BRITISH BEAVERS

by Jonathan Downes.



Despite the contemporary arguments over the reintroduction of the beaver to Scotland which Tom Anderson discusses above, and despite the accidental reintroductions of the species which he described in the 1997 CFZ Yearbook, it is a little known fact that in the words of the publicity schpiel for the acclaimed Channel Four Sci Fi series 'Dark Skies' "THEY'RE ALREADY HERE!"

I have no official view as to whether the world is being populated by 'grey' aliens from Zeta Reticuli, but it is an undoubted fact that for nearly thirty years there have been beavers living and probably breeding in an out of the way part of the River Axe on the Dorset/Somerset border.

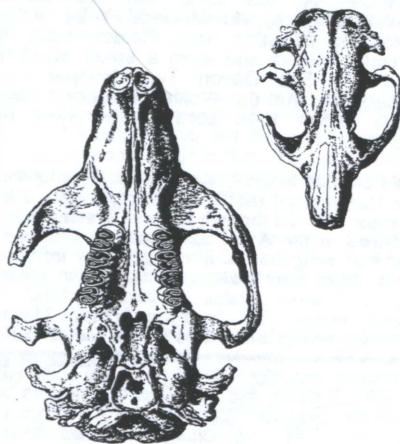
According to which account you accept, two or more animals escaped from Cricket St Thomas Wildlife Park in 1969 and set up home in the nearby countryside. I approached the wildlife park in 1991 for information but was told that no records were available, and so we are unable to verify whether the animals were of the Canadian or the European species.

There is no doubt, however, that they are there. A team from the Zoology Department at Exeter University photographed unmistakeable signs of beaver activity in the area in the early part of this decade and whilst I have not received any further reports since 1995, a newspaper report in the autumn of that year claimed that there was a small but healthy population in the area.

The Mammal Reports of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association during the mid 1950s have several cryptic accounts of what appear to be large aquatic rodents seen briefly in East Devon waterways. These may have been beavers but are more likely to have been either muskrats or most probably coypus. According to all the books on the subject of introduced and naturalised British

Wildlife the coypu never colonised waterways in the westcountry. There are, however, a few accounts of what seem to be coypus from river banks in Cornwall and the museum in Exeter has, apparently, a mounted specimen of a coypu shot on the River Exe at Topsham. These may be isolated occurrences but they prove that westcountry waterways are reasonably suitable habitats in which large aquatic and semi-aquatic rodents can thrive relatively un-noticed and undisturbed.

Beavers were, as Tom Anderson has noted, quite well known in historic times and indeed in certain parts of the country their remains in a sub-fossil state are relatively common. J.E. Harting described the sub-fossil beaver skulls discovered in the Fens of Lincolnshire in his 1880 book "British Animals Extinct within Historic Times". Pictures of these skulls taken from this book are reprinted below.



Another particularly peculiar occurrence involving this singular species (or perhaps not) took place in rural Essex in (I think) 1988 when the local paper reported that two beavers had made a dam on the local river and had subsequently been shot. We contacted the newspaper concerned to be told that whilst two animals had been shot they had in fact been fox cubs and were not beavers at all. One wonders how a small reddish canid can be mistaken for a large aquatic rodent, but as Clinton Keeling is fond of saying, there's nowt as queer as folk.

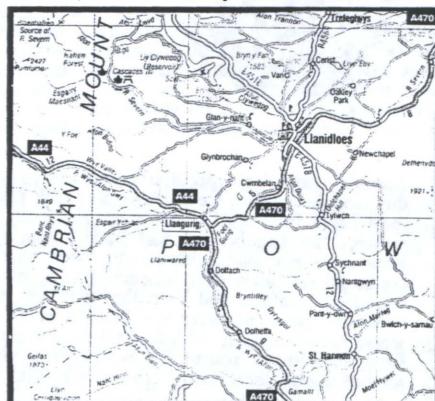
As always he is correct!

The Beast of Llangurig and others

by Terry Hooper

EDITOR's NOTE: Sightings of what appear to be wolverines are becoming almost commonplace in the British countryside at the moment. At the CFZ, we are currently investigating reports which MAY be of these voracious beasties from Haldon Hills, (just outside Exeter) and from a small wood near Seaton in East Devon. Terry Hooper shows, intriguingly, that the Wolverine reports may go back further than some researchers have thought...

As a member of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained (SITU) I often got quite a lot of unusual material through the post. Having talked to a friend in the Avon and Somerset Constabulary and indicating that I'd like to get more information on a 'mysterious beast' seen around the Llanguirig area of Powys, Wales. I was told 'OK'. That usually means "don't hold your breath". This time, however, within a few days I had a contact name!



The Llangurig area of Powys

Off went my letter and I waited. In the meantime I went over what I'd learned, most of it, sadly, from the Press and TV reports.

On the morning of the 23rd October 1980, farmer Micheal Nash was working near his barn on Pant-y-Drain farm located some two and a half miles (4 km) from Llangurig. From amongst the straw bales of the farm came a loud snoring noise that he had heard a number of times over recent days. In front of the barn were found large pawprints in the muddy ground and Mr Nash was convinced that some strange animal was in the barn. Over a period of twenty four hours five sheep had been killed out of his three thousand strong flock; all at different times with the flesh torn away from the bones. Mr Nash did the sensible thing - he telephoned the Dyfed/Powys police.

At 14:00 hours the police arrived and summed up the situation. They then also did the sensible thing and called in armed reinforcements. The back-up force arrived and as dusk crept in Calor Gas lamps were set up - there seemed no point in keeping armed men watching a barn in the dark for a potentially dangerous animal!

Mr Nash's suggestion that the open side of the barn be closed up by using gates in case the animal tried to break out was ignored, and at 17:45 hours the police decided to drive the animal out! They "hammered hell out of" the asbestos side of the barn, but nothing happened. Mr Nash's viewpoint was that the beast, being disturbed and scared crept out and away unseen.

This seems quite likely. At mid-day on the 24th police moved in armed and ready but found only wet straw where the animal had been urinating, some three or four inch (approx. 10cm) long droppings and owl pellets. Incredibly, the droppings were not saved for analysis.

By the evening of the 24th the police and accompanying media circus were gone. So, Mr Nash decided to carry on. However when he next approached the barn he again heard the sporing noise! The farmer shone his torch on the area that it appeared to come from and it all went quiet. On two or three occasions Mr Nash went back to the barn but minus his torch.

Nothing!

Whatever the animal was, it had obviously considered that its den had been compromised, and so it moved on somewhere else!

There are some interesting points to note. After the police had hammered on the barn some friends of



Wolverine

Mr Nash had seen "peculiar animal" cross the road about half a mile away at 23:30 hours. It was the farmer's opinion that this must have been the beast itself. A man from Shrewsbury who had seen the pawprint on TV telephoned Mr Nash to tell him that in his opinion it had been made by a Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*).

An animal food salesman who had previously worked in a zoo for two and a half years saw the print when he visited Pant-y-Drain. This man also identified the print as having been made by a Wolverine. And, true, from the photograph that I have in my possession, the print IS similar to that of a Wolverine.

So, was it indeed a Wolverine? These creatures inhabit the extensive taiga and tundra region of North America and Eurasia. Its European distribution is limited (or was) to Scandinavia, Northern Finland, and parts of the former Soviet Union. In Europe as a whole it is rare and threatened with extinction.

It has been suggested that there are at least two pairs living wild in the west of England which suggests that they are escapees from captivity, as the creature is naturally a solitary one by nature (except during the breeding season). The very fact that the Llangurig creature (if it were a wolverine) seemed to seek out a bed of straw in the barn also suggests that this is what the animal had been used to in captivity.

Some males have permanent territorial hunting grounds that can measure as much as 1000 square kilometers (about 700 square miles). They hunt both at night and during the day in these large areas.

and their role in the natural foodchain is quite positive as they feed mainly on weak and crippled animals - they wouldn't necessarily be a threat to sheep. In summer the Wolverine's diet consists of birds and their eggs, insects and larvae, small rodents (particularly the lemming), berries and oil rich seeds.

In winter the diet is carrion, larger mammals, ungulates and various chance tit-bits such as prey stolen from other carnivores (even wolves and bears) and its strength and apparent lack of fear are well known. It has a robust body, some two and a half to three feet (70-90 cms) long, and a tail length of six and a half to ten inches (15-25 cms) and weighs 10-20 kgs.

Animals of this species have dense brown fur with the upper facial hair and flanks paler. The Wolverine can live for fifteen-eighteen years and mates at the end of the summer of alternate years. The young (in a litter of two to five cubs) are born in the late winter after a relatively long pregnancy.

So, one can imagine, ignoring the Llangurig Wolverine (if it was a Wolverine) with no predator to threaten them and many sheep in large, rural hunting grounds as food, there is no reason to suppose that (conservatively) five or six pairs could be living in the countryside now.

I contacted the RSPCA, because one of their inspectors had seen the only professional to have studied the wounds and tracks. Their response was not unfamiliar - as was the case during my investigation of the "Barking Beast of Bath" (See A&M13), each of my letters and telephone calls were totally ignored. The Press, I found, were equally unhelpful. They had difficulty in spelling Pant-y-drain and didn't even mention the droppings found in the barn. As far as they were concerned, the creature was a lynx or a puma, and was really nothing more than a silly story to fill newspaper columns.

A response on the 11th of December from Chief Superintendent W.J.R. Edwards from the Dyfed/Powys Police HQ at Newtown was to the point and shows how little priority was given to the rival "big cat" and "wolverine" claims. Apparently, despite having personally checked the sheep, the RSPCA Inspector had not submitted a report on the incident. No veterinary surgeon had submitted a report either even though one sheep had to be put down.

The police had consulted wildlife experts who were of the opinion that the plaster casts taken from the pawprints were those of a very large dog. The

police Press Releases that I was sent revealed that, on Tuesday 25th November 1980 at 08:45 hours, Mr Ernie Lloyd of Coity Farm, Cwmbelan, saw a large 'puma' type animal and reported it. Officers could find no animal but large paw prints were noted on the spot where Mr Lloyd said that the cat had been standing.

I heard nothing back regarding the experts' opinions on the casts made from these prints. Sheep killed, according to Mr Lloyd, bore wounds similar to those caused by a fox.

Here I ought to point out that there is no denying that dog attacks had occurred in the Dyfed/Powys area and that at least one dog was shot whilst in the act of attacking sheep. Mr Nash had been at pains to point out that he had seen no animal at any time and definitely NOT a puma. People who say that "dogs don't attack/wound in that way" need to go out and see wounds from dog attacks before they speak.

But it was whilst I was corresponding with Mr Nash that he sent me a letter from a woman in Chester. It appears that the Dyfed/Powys Police also had a copy of this letter. During the summer of 1976 just outside of Conway.

Her husband and two daughters were with her, walking up the Synchent Pass when she spotted a 'good sized puma' sitting on a small mound, watching them and 'swishing' its tail about.

The woman yelled to her husband, but he couldn't see it from his position. In excitement, the woman ran with one of her daughters to get a closer look but before they reached it, the puma bounded off into the bracken and was soon lost as it went round a boulder. It was only then that the woman realised that what she was doing was dangerous and the two turned back.

They were then in for a REAL shock. Sitting calmly in the grass was a soft muted black/brown and light brown coloured cat with (possibly) spots. This cat was half the size of the puma (which was, by the way, a species with which the woman was very familiar, having spent many hours studying one at Chester Zoo).

However, she had great difficulties in identifying this second animal. She thought that it was possibly a lynx or a serval but was convinced that the puma she had seen was 'protecting' it. Young pumas have spots which fade as they grow older - possibly what the woman had seen was not two different species of felid after all, but merely a female Puma and her kitten.

In recent years I have also received several reports of lynx from that part of Wales which suggests that the exotic felid population is thriving. No doubt someone COULD come up with Welsh UFO reports from that period, and they would claim that the animals described in this article were Alien Big Cats (ABC's) rather than exotic animals that some irresponsible idiot had seen fit to dump into the wild.

It should be remembered that a cat which had escaped or been released into that part of Wales would have abundant food sources for decades. When you add to that, the fact that anyone who reports a Big Cat is automatically made fun of by the newspapers there is no reason that they could not survive unmolested. I have also found over the years that losses from flocks of sheep are taken for granted when they roam free. Some drown and get carried away by rivers, some fall down old mine shafts/cliffs/gulleys and so forth and the corpses are never found. The last explanation that most farmers will come up with is that a big cat is killing their stock.

There is certainly a need for Fortean Zoologists to start logging livestock losses each year and to see whether they coincide with sightings of big cats and other out of place predators. It would be interesting to find out just how many sheep and other domestic animals are just listed as "Missing - Cause Unknown"!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Whereas many authorities are now beginning to give grudging credence to the idea that there are large cats of three or four different species at large in the British Countryside, the concept of wolverines, which are - after all the largest and most ferocious of the European mustelids being at large in the wilds (and not so wilds) of the United Kingdom, is a difficult concept for many people to grasp.

After a series of sightings in the Haldon Hills, we contacted Robin Khan, the Chief Forestry Officer who was very scathing about the concept of wolverines at loose anywhere in the United Kingdom. He told us that he was certain that all sightings were misidentifications and that the concept was essentially ridiculous.

A few years ago people in similar positions said the same thing to me about the existence of British Big Cats. The evidence for them is overwhelming, and indeed I have seen them on two occasions. In view of this, I am prepared to keep a cautiously open mind on the subject of British wolverines until further evidence, either for or against is produced!

The Tale of the Weird, Warbling Whatsit of the Westcountry

by Jan Scarff

On Tuesday 16th September 1997 at ten past two, BBC Radio Devon broadcast its fortnightly programme "Weird about the West", with resident host Janet Kipling and two presenters whose names will be only too familiar to readers of this magazine - Jonathan Downes and Graham Inglis. Their guest this week was Terry Hooper, who as well as being a regular contributor to 'Animals & Men' is also the founder of the national Exotic Animals Register. Their subject was strange and obscure animal sightings across the British Isles.

Listening to this broadcast were a husband and wife living in Clyst St Mary, a little village about five kilometres east of Exeter on the A 3052. For the previous three weeks they had been woken up each night at four minutes past two by a strange sound resembling the call of some exotic bird. At first they thought that it may have been revellers leaving the public house opposite, but after the fifth night they realised that this could not be the case. The lady decided to rig up her tape recorder in an attempt to capture the noise on cassette. She was not to be disappointed - at four minutes past two that morning, twenty one calls lasting approximately forty seconds were recorded, and she was convinced that they emanated from a tall poplar tree outside her bedroom window.

After hearing Terry Hooper give out his telephone number on the radio show she telephoned him to see if he was able to shed any light on the mystery. Once Terry had heard the tape he immediately telephoned Jon Downes at the Centre for Fortean Zoology. I was there with Jon at the time, and Terry told us about the strange bird calls. Jon and I discussed the matter and came up with a number of potential hypotheses:

* Peacocks from Crealy Park - a small tourist conservation centre about 1.25 km up the road from where the noise had been heard.

* Wild pheasants. This hypothesis seemed unlikely because it was the wrong time of the year for them to call.

* A cockerel. There is a farm adjacent to the property.

* An electronic intruder alarm at a utility substation in the locality.

Jon and I then telephoned the lady (who has asked to remain anonymous), who was very helpful and played us the tape recording down the 'phone line. My first reaction was that it was a seabird (possibly a cormorant) as they are commonly seen on the River Exe about four kms to the west of Clyst St Mary. But at four minutes past two in the morning? Jon tended to agree with my interpretation and we asked the lady for permission to investigate the events on the following Friday night. They lady was only too happy to give us her permission.

The following day we telephoned Crealy Park, explained our predicament and requested information about any peacocks, pheasants or other large birds that were in their collection. When they informed us that the only birds they kept were canaries, Jon and I were in fits of laughter at the thought of a canary the size of a turkey lurking in the wilds of Clyst St Mary. Between chuckles I thanked the lady from Crealy Park (who must have thought that we were completely bonkers) and hung up!

That evening, my son Lewis and I conducted a reconnaissance of the site. The house is by a brook and the nearest large body of moving water is the River Clyst two kilometres to the west. There are four Italian Poplar trees on the property itself with more across the road around the perimeter of the pub car park. There are two small copses of deciduous trees in the area - Cat Copse (500m to the north) and Crealy Copse (500m to the east). The lady showed us around her property and indicated the tree that she believed was the source of these mysterious bird calls. She also showed us the location of the security lighting and the passive infra-red detectors in the garden.

Next I spoke to their neighbour, who was a very pleasant ex-RAF chap about the mysterious noises that had been heard next door. He told me that he was up quite late each night working on his computer, and although he was not positive, he had a vague recollection of hearing something one night, but he wasn't able to swear to it!

He then showed me around his property and I gained permission for the members of the

gained permission for the members of the investigation team to go onto his land on the following Friday night.

One of the landlords from the public house opposite then spoke to me, and in answer to my questions told me that he had never heard anything odd on any night in the previous three weeks (or, indeed at all), but added that as he always went to bed 'dog tired' after a couple of 'nightcaps', it wasn't really surprising.

Now it was time to get the investigation team together and to sort out our plan of action. I telephoned Dave Hopkins, an avid ornithologist and veteran of our Woodbury Common skywatches (see Goblin Universe #7) and Jon telephoned Alyson Diffey, a psychic and medium. The four of us arranged to meet at the pub on the Friday night.

We met as arranged and after a pleasant dinner and a chat with the landlord, we stayed until closing time when the four of us took up our positions in the car park. Julian, the pub manager was so interested in what we were doing that he decided to join us. Alyson had previously 'scanned' the area and received a vision of a 'thought dragon' created by ancient druids to protect a nearby sacred site.

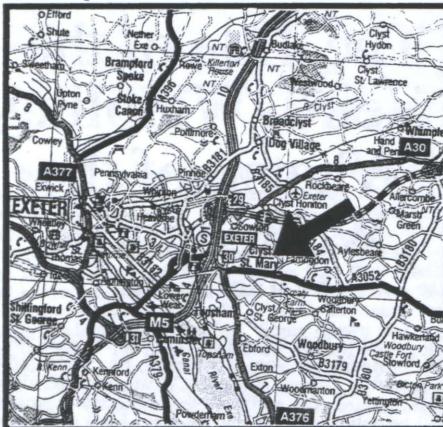
Time was ticking by, and so we set up our sound and video recording equipment, lights etc. At 01:30 we switched on the audio cassette recorder. At 01:50 on went the video camera and as it approached two o'clock everyone was feeling a bit apprehensive wondering what we were going to hear. The earlier jollity and silliness had vanished as we commenced what, to us, was a very serious investigation.

By 02:05 we were all 'willing' the sound to occur, but when, by ten minutes past two nothing had happened disappointment had set in and we packed up about five minutes later, all going home for a well deserved rest!

Imagine our surprise the next morning. I telephoned the couple who had originally reported the noises and told them that we had been unable to record or video anything despite our array of (relatively) hi-tech equipment. His reply was that they had heard the sounds as usual, at 02:04 as his wife had been watching our activities through their bedroom window. The noise had been repeated twenty one times as usual, and in fact his wife had made tea for us all expecting us to join them in the house to tell them what we thought of their mysterious bird calls.

I immediately contacted Jon and was dispatched back to Clyst St Mary with two sealed, blank

cassette tapes.



Clyst St. Mary

I spoke at length to the lady and gentleman about the apparent anomaly of the investigating team neither hearing or recording anything. They assured me again that the sounds had occurred as we were standing outside.

I left them with the two cassette tapes and requested that they record the noises for the next two nights (sunday and monday 22/3rd) starting the recording at 01:50 each night so that we were able to hear if anything else occurred.

The anomalous noises occurred and were duly recorded giving Jon and me our first chance to listen to the whole thing from beginning to end. When we heard the tapes, one thing was obvious - each 'call' was exactly the same length, and there was exactly the same time interval between 'calls', and, according to our informants, the calls occurred at exactly the same time each day.

As the gentleman of the house is in some not unconsiderable pain and discomfort due to receiving some unwanted radio-therapy I decided that it was up to us to get to the bottom of this intriguing mystery as soon as possible. Therefore, without further delay, I arranged that I would be present to record INSIDE the house on the night of Tuesday 23rd/Wednesday 24th.

I arrived there about half past nine that evening and

set up the video camera in the bedroom and the four track Tascam Porta-One mini-studio outside the bedroom window. This done, we retired to the lounge for coffee, biscuits and a long wait.

Earlier that day I had telephoned to ask whether they or any of their family had owned a novelty alarm clock of some sort. By this stage both Jon and I were of the opinion that the sounds appeared to have been electronically processed in some way. They assured me that to their knowledge no-one had ever brought anything of that sort into the house.

At midnight, their son Paul arrived to assist with the operation. We both listened to all three sets of recordings again and 'bashed' a few ideas around, but always coming back to the same conclusions that the sounds appeared to be 'electronically produced', and that the exact time of 02:04 HAD to be of some great significance.

01:30 came, and mindful of all the best traditions of psychic research I took the temperature in the corner of the room where the lady assured me the sound had emanated from. I continued to do so at five minute intervals until 02:00 and it stayed at a constant 20°C.

At 01:50 both the mini-studio and the video camera were switched on. I then did a check with the window open to ensure that we had an exact point to work from on both tapes. Then the battery on the video camera failed so that we had to repeat all the work that we had already done.

Finally 02:00 arrived, and you could actually taste the atmosphere in the house as our tension levels rose.

Then at 02:04 we heard the noise. Whilst Paul attempted to locate the source of the sound inside the room, I ran outside and set off all the powerful lights I had brought with me to illuminate the poplar tree.

By the time I got to the back window Paul was just opening it. I pushed it shut, listened at the glass and then opened it again. The sounds were certainly emanating from the bedroom and appeared to be coming from the dressing table.

I ran back inside to find Paul frantically pulling open every drawer from his mother's dressing table. "The bloody thing is moving from drawer to drawer" he shouted excitedly. I too had the same thought and the hairs on the back of my neck began to rise. Twenty one calls and then the only sound was our breathing.

We looked at each other with Paul admitting that he'd earlier told his parents that he would only believe in this phenomenon if it was 'in his face', but that he couldn't have been any closer to it as it happened.

Just then, the voice of Paul's father came from the living room. "Darling, are you wearing your talking watch?" Paul's mum replied: "No, it's on my dressing table", whereupon her husband said, "why not show it to the boys?"

Paul's Dad had remembered a novelty 'talking watch' that he had received as a free gift with a pair of slippers. I, too had seen this watch and heard it 'talk', but the noises that it made were nothing like the sounds that we had heard. However, on closer examination we discovered that there was an alarm setting and it was set for 02:04AM. Coincidence? I think not!

We reset the alarm for 02:13 and waited. As Paul's mum was putting on the kettle the alarm went off and lo and behold, to much laughter, the case was solved.

I'm happy to say that the case was solved within a week of the Exeter Strange Phenomena Research Group/CFZ hearing of it, but the most important aspect of the whole affair is that, for the first time in over a month, two very helpful and caring people can now get a decent night's sleep!

My thanks to all involved in this investigation and I hope to get bought many a drink in the future for this story. In this case the truth wasn't 'out there' it was in the dressing table!

EDITOR'S NOTE: I have included this lengthy and amusing account, not only because it shows that we can do our job and because even though for a while, the case appeared paranormal in nature it began with a straightforward referral to the CFZ, but also because it sets the record straight. The day before the case was solved, Dominic Arkwright from BBC Radio 4's "Today" programme visited the CFZ to make a brief documentary about our work.

He followed us around for a day and included a brief piece about the strange bird noises of Clyst St. Mary. Now the truth (even though we didn't know it at the time) can be told.

It would be interesting to know how many other quasi fortean phenomena which have been reported in so many books and journals have equally prosaic explanations!

Wherfore art thou Nessie?

by Neil Arnold.

Maybe you're only ever a monster hunter if you've got money, suck up to the right people and have the time and money, but on the 28th and 29th of August 1996 I became a hunter, albeit for a very short time. I had realised an ambition of mine with a magickal trip that had been nothing but a dream for some fifteen years of my twenty-two year old life. For, I believe, that there is no such thing as an amateur monster hunter - let's face it, even children have seen mysterious beasts, and so armed with my trusty camcorder, my forty quid return ticket and a bag of clothes I set off.

Drumnadrochit here I come!

It was an awful twelve hour journey from my home in Kent, through London and north to the railway station at Inverness. A warning to anyone who plans a visit to Loch Ness. Drive!!!

The stench of other people's stale sweat, lack of sleep and grinding headaches may be all part of the excitement but even Indiana Jones never had it this bad and by the time my coach arrived at Inverness I felt like a walking corpse. Nearer to Inverness the stunning scenery was reminiscent of the terrain of Canada, with its huge fir trees and gargantuan rocks. I tell you, that if a dinosaur had emerged from the forest I wouldn't have been particularly surprised because the foliage was so thick.

It seems to stare down upon you, draining you with its looming presence. The reindeer run wild and heavy mist blankets the peaks and I was still only six hours into the journey. Chewing on a Mars Bar at three in the morning was my only nourishment and there were times when I really thought that I wouldn't make it.

I think that if I'd walked all the way to Scotland then I might have appreciated the different atmospheres, but the hum of the coach became a deathly drone as the scenery flashed by my blurred

vision. In a nowhere land, eight hundred miles away from home the sickness began to creep in. The vast landscapes had me in their grip, and I realised that the prize was to be at the end of the rainbow, and that I just couldn't give up.

Dark rings under my eyes welcomed the freshness of morning. The final part of the journey to Inverness was a winding route that left all other memories behind. All the other stops throughout the trip were a blur, completely unmemorable in their dreariness, but Inverness had a crispness about it and every small river that ran like a vein between the great grey rocks was like a taster for the great Loch itself. Yet, I was still a fair way from my destination and as 11:00 a.m drew near the rain lashed at the windows.

At around midday I stepped off the hell-bus carrying a heavy tent, a heavy rucksack and an even heavier head which was pounding like a bell. Yet, although the station was about as interesting as..... a station, already the tourist attractions were sparkling although I was still twenty miles from the village of Drumnadrochit. At the station, cardboard 'Nessie' signs littered the grey pavement and I boarded the waiting bus with a tingle in my hair and a paracetamol lodged half way down my throat.

The dream was becoming more and more real, but it still hadn't sunk in. But, I never would accept the fact that I was actually there until I saw the water of the great lake stretched out before me. The pull of the place lifted the haze from my head as we sped through the rural beauty of the curling lanes.

Drumnadrochit is a cheerful little place, and before I knew it, I was there and the sight that awaited me brought a lump to my throat. Through the drizzling rain a huge blanket of water stretched out before me like a velvet curtain.

As the rain poured down the water was still. Dead still. Only then did I realise that I was at one end of the enigmatic Loch and that everything else was a world away. Here was my time ... before my eyes and I'd done it all myself with the minimum of equipment. It was my obsession brought to life.

The thrill had been there throughout all the years of money worries and hope, and if it wasn't for the undoubtedly fact that if I'd been a 'real' monster-hunter I could have travelled anywhere that I wanted, for a few days Loch Ness and whatever was in it was MINE!

The books that I'd read and the pictures that I'd seen just hadn't prepared me for the sight or the thought that I'd finally achieved what I thought that

I had always thought that it would take too much to travel to a place that bears such an awesome legend - perhaps the greatest monster legend ever!

I set foot in the village. With my spirits high I scanned the vast horizon that consisted of unbelievable mountains, enveloping mists, green hills and truly staggering scenes that were a shock to the senses. The air throbbed with a heavy freshness and what seemed like a crackle of electricity spun an inspiring web of possibilities that were strewn before me.

The little shops that were dotted about everywhere were covered with the familiar imaged of 'Nessie' although I was soon to learn that the place lacked a serious attitude towards the 'beast' and that the place was really just a great exploitative, mickey-taking, money-making scheme.

To my left the Loch Ness Visitors Centre stood tall whilst to my right a winding road was littered with various gift shops selling everything and anything you could think of from 'Nessie' cups, models, fluffy-toys and keyrings to chocolate, pencils, rubbers, shirts and air fresheners all emblazoned with the image of cryptozoology's greatest icon.

Of course, there has to be an element of fun but the lack of serious books on the subject saddened me, and it appeared that the only real source of information was the Visitors Centre which basically told me what I'd already read in my own books. However, I was open-minded and too excited to worry.

I found my campsite, the tidy Borlum Farm which lies just a mile from Urquhart Castle and the Loch. With the weather clearing I set up camp, costing me only a couple of quid, and I munched on my rolls and biscuits before gathering my film equipment, and taking on the Loch itself.

The road which led down to the entrance of the ancient castle was long and heavy. the view was startling, across the hills and up at the steaming mountains. Scenery that didn't quite sink in, seeing as I usually live on a Coun'1 Estate in Kent! And then I caught a glimpse of something shiny beyond the fringe of trees. The cauldron of curiosity; the water that draws believer and sceptic alike.

As I made my way towards the Loch, the castle seemed like it was peering at me like some watcher of the waters standing like a guardian of that black abyss. This crumbling ruin has probably seen the mysterious beast more times than all the fortunate humans because the castle and the creature seem to exist hand in hand.

To appreciate the Loch I believe that you must become immersed for it is a dazzling sight. It is far larger than the photographs would have you believe and its grounds are just a pathway to the water's edge.

The castle casts an ominous shadow as you shuffle into its echoing confines which are illuminated with red lighting effects.

The sound of bagpipes provide a background tune to your journey through the spindly row of trees towards the lake.

For miles and miles the darkness shimmers like a mirrored carpet and the ripples and shadows emerge from nowhere. The unseen undercurrents bubble below the surface and the blackness comes right in to the sheer banks and sloping sides of the lake which could hide many a cavern.

The sheer size of the place is frightening and a few times I found it hard to take it all in, for it engulfs the soul in a mystical essence.

Sure, I'd always believed in Nessie so coming here was always going to be stunning, but anyone who walks away not mesmerised might as well be dead because the scene is truly stunning and the setting is truly poetic.

The sides of the Loch are so steep that they are hostile terrain for any explorer, for even if the water weren't mysterious enough the rest of the place is equally inaccessible. Fishing boats were just dots on the horizon, and as I made my way towards the water's edge the mist embraced my senses. Just standing there was hypnotising.

Under the stark wing of the castle and on the edge of the chasm I wondered how anyone could just dismiss the stories of the Loch Ness Monster because, obviously, there was no way that this water could ever be truly explored. In its beauty

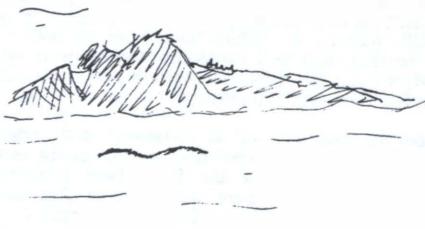
Loch Ness is incredibly powerful and draining. It is almost a fantasy setting but I knew that whatever lives there has to be a long way from pure fiction. I was determined, however, that there was no way that I was going to stand and watch the water and shout "Monster!" if I merely saw a duck or a floating log.

If I was to report a sighting it would have to be conclusive. If we are to count the shadows, the little bumps in the water, the shadows and the wakes as credible sightings then I saw 'Nessie' twice in under fifteen minutes but those days are long gone.

However, I maintain that 'yes, the Loch CAN play tricks on you' but Sue Blackmore must think that all the witnesses are plain stupid if they travel eight hundred miles to see a floating log and then to report it as a sighting of a real creature.

On the shore of the bay I stood and filmed. Flanked by two white rock faces and a pair of exceptionally stupid sceptics (who claimed that Nessie was a fish), I cupped the silken water in my hand, grasped a few stones and took in the aura of magic. I had never come here expecting the beast to rise before me, and I would be fooling myself if I just filmed dots in the distance and claimed a sighting. My advice is, if you go monster-hunting don't film anything.

If you look at some of the photographs taken at the Loch they are nothing more than rubbish! Those showing long necks are still credible as are those which depict obese humps, but I feel that we should dismiss the pictures that show nothing more than waves and ripples. I filmed a large shadow that I could see through a haze of fog. Nowhere else on the Loch seemed to throw up a similar image, but I didn't become overly excited. I just laughed to myself and thought "If that IS you, Nessie, then I need something better than this!" The shadow seemed to stretch for about twenty feet, but as I zoomed in on it with my camera I realised that although it seemed out of character, anyone with any experience is aware of the images that this water can create.



The shadow on the calm loch against the mountainous background. It is interesting to compare this shape with the classic McNab photograph showing the 'shape' against Urquhart Castle. McNab's 'shadow' was more protruding, though, whereas my 'shape' appeared to be certainly beneath the water.

I also filmed a classic wake that appeared to stem from nothing. There was no boat going by, no duck and no diver! Just an enormous wake that's all. I thought at the time that my two insignificant pieces of footage would amaze some of the sad little people who seem determined to 'see' Nessie in every little ripple, but not all of us are content to 'create' our own monster images.



The familiar wake. What could have caused it, though?

People littered the water's edge. They appeared to be tourists and the sort of non-believers who basically flock to mock, but there you go. For me it was like a dream and almost a year later it still is. In all the time I was on the Lochside I never expected to see a serpent, a plesiosaur or even an otter but I knew that something was in that water and I felt honoured to be part of that place. The ghosts of acrons past still haunt those hills and each one has a story to tell people like me.

Some of the folk who sell their little oddments to the tourists are not believers and are just there to make money but there are a lot of 'normal' people at the Loch who have seen strange things but aren't interested in making money out of their experiences. Visitors to the area should take the waters with an open mind because whether you believe or not it is a beautiful place, and sometimes, although the beast does lie within the lake, you forget that you are a monster hunter and become a nature addict or a poet, even though mere words are hardly sufficient to describe the awe one feels at the breathtaking views.

The Loch simply cannot be conquered on on foot, although even if you are without transport, you can pay to sail on (or under) the waters. I, however simply found myself captivated and rooted to the spot. For a few days I was simply there to experience the things that I thought I would never see.

I never really want to see the mystery solved. It has been around too long for that, but sometimes I wish that some droppings or maybe an egg could be found. Mind you, a huge cavern has recently been discovered in the lake, and if it has taken this long to discover a giant cave, then how long will it take to catch one beastie?

The truth is that the scenery and the legend itself are like a brother and sister. One cannot live without the other. Who knows? Other undiscovered animals may live within the shadows, and I have to admit that it wouldn't surprise me if they did - considering the lay out of the place and the surrounding areas. If you do go to the lake you have to go with your heart open, and not with the idea of denigrating the legend.

Nessie hunter Steve Feltham has been at the lochside for many years now (unfortunately I never got around to finding him), but HE appreciates the place for itself and I was lucky enough to pick up one of his cute little Nessie figurines. But despite his frustration in not having gained that conclusive piece of evidence he is still there because he is following his dream, but he is not prepared to desperately try and see things that aren't there!

My biggest disappointment of the venture was the attitude of the locals and the shops nearby. Of course, they have to make their money, but they could try to treat the matter with a little more respect.

Next time I go, I am determined to have one of the boat trips as well as a tour in a bus around the shores. Of course my own sighting would be wonderful but if it ever did occur, I really don't know how I'd react.

It was just my luck that only a few days after my return a party of school-children saw a classic 'upturned boat' shape in the water AND some video was taken showing a strange frothing of the water, although as I have said already, THAT type of evidence is too fragile now.

The memory that I have of those wonderful few days is as strong as ever and I strongly recommend the place in general to anyone who is considering a visit. If, however you are a monster-hunter then the excitement is even more intense.

I always thought that Loch Ness was too far away, but then again so are most of your dreams unless you follow them and find them!

'The Migo - Not yet explained?

by Nick Molloy

In February 1972, a Japanese newspaper report told of a strange water 'monster' alleged to inhabit Lake Dakataua on New Britain. New Britain is the largest island in the Bismarck Archipelago, situated off the northeast coast of Papua New Guinea. The 'monster' is referred to locally as the migo (pronounced mee-go). Throughout this article, what is, or is alleged to be the migo will simply be referred to as M.

During January and February of 1994, a Japanese television crew succeeded in filming something upon the lake surface. So far, no portion of the film (at least to my knowledge) has been broadcast in the UK. A still from the film, was however, published in issue 102 of the *Fortean Times*.

I am a member of those select few who have been able to view and analyse the footage. What follows is an attempt to weigh up and assess some of the various interpretations of the footage to date.

The horseshoe shaped Lake Dakataua is separated from the ocean by high cliffs; as the crow flies - no more than a few hundred yards. Throughout the sixty minute plus documentary it was suggested by the film makers, that Lake Dakataua was connected to the ocean by underwater channels. Further, and leading on from this it was suggested that M gains entry to Lake Dakataua, from the oceans via these underwater channels, and is subsequently witnessed by locals.

To test out this theory exploratory dives were conducted in the ocean under the cliffs, separating Dakataua from the open sea. Further, whilst the whole of the documentary is presented in Japanese, a couple of interviews are conducted with English speakers (including Roy Mackal). One of those interviewed, informed us that a study would be undertaken to investigate whether the lake was tidal. Indeed, this man also stated that there have been sightings of M at the point where Dakataua is closest to the sea (he pointed this out on a map). The results of this investigation were either not given or presented in Japanese.

Two main pieces of alleged M footage are shown during the documentary. One of these is undoubtedly taken at sea. This is validated by two things. The first is demonstrated by the lack of land visible in the film. Lake Dakataua is not big enough to produce this effect. The second is demonstrable by the crude map drawn on screen immediately preceding the footage. This confirms beyond reason that the footage was not taken on Lake Dakataua, but taken instead on the neighbouring ocean.

The footage itself is less than perfect, no more than a second or two. When viewing a less than perfect copy of the film, Karl Shuker stated that:

"... it revealed what appeared to be a section of the body rapidly emerging from the water in a vertical upsurge and bearing two slender projections resembling dorsal fins or spikes before emerging again - followed immediately by the vertical emergence of what might have been a tail, with two horizontal whale-like flukes. It was clear that the object being filmed was not only animated but animate - alive".

When watching my less than perfect copy of the film, I concurred totally with Shuker's conclusions. I was convinced that the short piece of film concluded with the submergence of a large forked tail, something not seen in modern whales and more commonly associated with primitive whales or Archaeocetes. Despite the footage not being filmed on Lake Dakataua itself, it appeared to show a completely unknown animal.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The fault for both these copies must rest with me. At the time my video copying facilities were less than perfect (in fact they are not much better now - something which I intend to rectify in the short term future). Even the 'master copy' was less than clear having been transferred from the Japanese/US NTSC format to the British PAL format.

After viewing the master copy, however, it was clear that this conclusion was in error. Viewing a clearer copy of the film, what I had first interpreted as a single large animal became three silhouetted dolphins, very close together, rising, then diving in tandem with each other. Even on the master copy it was still difficult to distinguish between the animals and the first impression still led overwhelmingly to my original conclusion. It was only with carefully repeated viewings that the truth became apparent.

However, it should be stressed that diagrammatic representations of this sequence appearing with

articles penned by Darren Naish in the CFZ Yearbook 1997 and The Cryptozoology Review are highly schematic. They give an example of how rising dolphins can create false impressions of larger animals. The actual footage was capable of misleading even experienced observers.

The first section of film purported to show M is of known animals. What then of the second piece of film alleged to show M?

This piece of footage was much longer and comprised a good few minutes. It was, however, shot at a considerable distance. I would estimate at least half a mile. The zoom of the camera helped to eat up this distance, but nevertheless, the resulting footage is distant and inconclusive.

My initial impression was that the footage showed a large creature with many crocodilian features. Two different portions of M were clearly visible. The front portion (head) tapered off at the front, into what looked like a rather elongated snout. A series of apparent bony ridges projected at the back of the head.

For the majority of the film it is difficult to discern the body of M. Water appeared to fill the void between the front and back portions of M. The tail of M also appeared crocodilian in feature. Numerous spikes or ridges appeared to run along the length of the back section of M.

However, if the tail appeared crocodilian in nature, it did not correspond to normal crocodilian behaviour. Throughout the footage M swims slowly across our view. I would estimate the speed of M at no more than three or four knots. Its method of propulsion certainly seems tail based. During one piece of footage it is clear that the tail propels M through the water by a side to side lateral motion of the tail (this is very well demonstrated on the master copy if you fast-forward this section). However, during other portions of this film, M appears to propel itself by vertical undulations of the tail. The back portion clearly submerges and re-appears on several occasions. This behaviour is not consistent with that of a crocodile. These vertical undulations are a strong argument for ruling out any known crocodile identities.

The length of the M shown is also a contentious issue. Mackal produced a length of 33 feet. Naish expressed that a length of 20 feet would appear more consistent. To establish a precise length would be very difficult without detailed analysis and calculations giving known constants.

Estimating distances on watery backgrounds is a

notoriously difficult procedure, given the lack of immediate background objects for comparison. During the film out only comparative items are birds that fly and land on the lake's surface and the trees on the far shore in the background.

In his book "The Loch Ness Monster - The Evidence" (Aquarian Press 1986), Steuart Cambell has suggested techniques for length and height analysis given known parameters. Constantly challenged and changing, such analyses bring to mind the phrase "Lies, damned lies, and statistics".

Mo cover, and either way, M is of considerable dimensions. It is much bigger than the water birds that are close by and it would not seem unreasonable that the length is somewhere between the estimates of Naish and Mackal.

It has recently been suggested in some quarters that the creature filmed on the lake is a hoax. So the suggestion goes, the Japanese film crew have towed a very large (but dead) crocodile across our field of vision. This is supposedly supported by an alleged wake in front of the creature and the claim that a live crocodile will always react to a wake that crosses its path.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As far as I am aware the only person who actually made this claim was Richard Askew, ex of the British Earth and Aerial Mysteries Society (BEAMS) and now an independent researcher who claimed, one evening about a year ago, to Graham Inglis and myself, and later (I believe) to Darren Naish, that not only was the said crocodile dead but that it was lifted out of the water by some inflated flotation device.

I have not been overly convinced by these particular hoax assertions. After discussions the piece of film that shows the wake was pointed out to me (on a copy of the master tape).

After repeated of this film, I find myself unable to concur that the film actually shows a wake. What was pointed out to me as a possible wake, I had assumed throughout, was either heat distortion arising from the lake's surface, or possibly a discrepancy in the actual quality of the tape.

After a re-assessment of the film, my original diagnosis of heat ha e/distortion still holds.

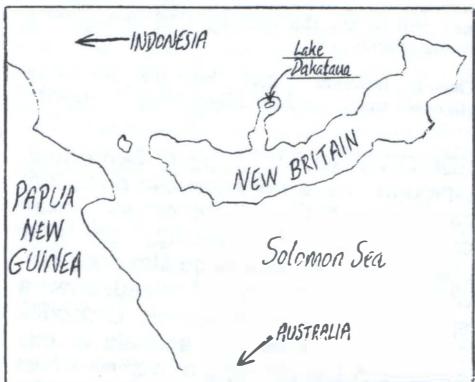
Further, if the creature is indeed dead, there remains the question of how the rear portion appears to propel the front portion undulates both vertically and horizontally during the film.

Inconclusion therefore, what have we got? The

usual cryptozoological arguments have risen their proverbial heads. A hoax, versus a known animal, versus a true cryptozoological anomaly. Although it should not be ruled out, I feel that a hoax is unlikely. If a hoax has been perpetrated it is certainly one of an elabo ate nature. Some sort of mechanical model would seem to be the only possible candidate which could account for M's apparent tail undulations. The film was not consistent with a dead animal being towed. However, an interesting omission from the documentary was the disappearance of the creature. Presumably it sank back into the depths of Lake Dakataua. This was not shown and questions have to be asked why?

If the film is of an unknown animal, the resulting footage is too indistinct and fails to provide us with enough detail to conclude a definitive identity. We can only speculate on a range of possibilities. If on the other hand the film shows a known animal, it is still of considerable zoological significance.

A 1974 study of Lake Dakataua by a wildlife researcher showed that the lake was devoid of life. We are still left, therefore, with an out-of-place animal, alb t a known one. Identifying the creature, however, is speculative given the problems outlined above.



It should be further stressed that the documentary was wholly in Japanese. It may be possible that some important data was omitted through a lack of translation. An example of this is the claim that Japanese scientists analysed the film and concluded that M was fifteen metres long. If this could be verified, the known crocodile identity could be immediately ruled out.

It has also been suggested to me that the following hoax scenario could have been perpetrated. That is whereby, a known animal, such as a crocodile, could have been deliberately transported and released into Lake Dakataua and then filmed deliberately to look ambiguous. However, a known crocodile could not produce the vertical undulations shown by the tail.

Naish has suggested that the picture enhancements led to the picture becoming 'pixelised' and this could perhaps account for the vertical tail undulations.

Yet, it should be stressed that the vertical undulations were also visible in parts of the film that had not been enhanced and were therefore not pixelised. Further, although the enhancement may pixelise the static image, it should not cause the moving image to 'jump' thus giving the impression of vertical tail undulation.

Finally, it is also alleged that the same Japanese film crew captured a smaller M on film in August 1994.

The film allegedly shows a smaller M but much closer to the camera. Given the large degree of indeterminates surrounding the first Migo film, the second film may go a long way to revealing the true nature of Dakataua's mysterious denizen(s). It may well be that the February 1994 film shows a known animal.

Thus far however, I don't think the case for an unknown animal has been satisfactorily dismissed.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I have been told, although I have not seen it in print, that certain U.S authorities on contemporary cryptozoology are now alleging that the first Migo film does not, as Darren Naish has suggested, show a specimen of the Indopacific Crocodile but in fact shows two animals of this species in the process of mating whilst a third crocodile (presumably of the same species) is following them in a display of what the smuttier members of the CFZ core team have described as a display of reptilian voyeurism.

The same sources have also claimed

that the 1994 film (to which Nick Molloy refers in his article) is clearly of an Indopacific Crocodile which is why it has not been widely distributed.

I agree with Nick that the hypothesis that the film shows a dead crocodile being towed behind an unseen boat is highly unlikely for the reasons he has given.

I also cannot bring myself to believe in the hypothesis of reptilian troilism, for the simple reason that like Darren Naish, and Nick Molloy I am convinced that the animal in the film (whatever it is) is a single living creature.

I cannot comment on the second Migo film because I have not yet seen it, so I have to agree with Nick, that in words stolen from the closing sequences of quite a few episodes of 'The X Files' the case still remains open...

Much of the present confusion surrounding the 'Migo' footage is, as already stated our fault in that the video copies made available to UK researchers were less than perfect and came from us. I must stress, however, that as regular readers of this magazine will be aware, I was an enthusiastic believer in the veracity of the film, and remained so until one evening in late 1995 when I watched it together with Darren Naish and he began to explain his theories to me.

Whereas I think that there is no doubt that the creature is crocodilian, I agree with Nick that the matter does, indeed warrant a degree of further investigation, if only because (at worst) it will identify a new population of the Indopacific Crocodile on the island of New Britain. At best, the truth may be far more exciting!

"Don't look back in anger"
sang whichever of the Gallagher
brothers it was.

"I won't"
said Clinton Keeling, as he presented us with:

CLINTON'S COGITATIONS ON ISSUE 14

Henceforth it will be my pleasure to make comments - for what they are, or are not, worth - on items in the current issue of 'Animals & Men'. As a means of introduction, I'm a professional zoologist and ex-zoological garden curator who is primarily concerned with the education side of his work, and wild animal husbandry. For many years I was an enthusiastic, and optimistic cryptozoologist - but no longer, I'm very much afraid.

Just a couple of comments on items that appeared in issue 13. I was amused to read on page five that a "Mountain Lion" had been reported "by various witnesses living wild along a railway track in West London". Wild witnesses indeed! On page twenty-nine Tom Anderson writes about "the mechanics of impaling a fish on a hook..." and so reminds me of Dr Johnson's succinct description of angling per se - "a line with a fish on one end and a fool on the other".

Anyway, let's look at issue 14, which like all of "Animals & Men" provides much scope for a rich source/souce of cogitation.

I thought the cartoon on page three absolutely brilliant, although I can't quite make up my mind whether it's an Ameranthropoid trying to look like our revered editor - or vice versa!

Page four - The Jungle Cat. This is an extremely adaptable species, as its habitat ranges from rice ne grassland (remember 'Reed Cat' is an alternative name), up to 6,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayas, so certainly our climate would cause it little or no inconvenience. I noted with surprise that in the same paragraph that confounded Kellas Cat was mentioned - surprise that a magazine of this calibre should seemingly take it

seriously. Let it be stated here and now, once and for all, that the KC is a large feral domestic cat PERHAPS with an admixture of *F.sylvestris* blood in it.

The mention of the Bee Eaters occasionally nesting in this country (page five) reminds me of the famous occasion in 1953 when, as far as is known for the first time, this species successfully nested here in Sussex. Why a pair should have decided, apparently apropos of nothing, to go about their domestic duties so far from home is a mystery, but do it they did. I frequently have to travel between my home in Surrey to Worthing, and as I pass a large sand pit near the village of Washington I always mentally nod to it and think of the event now so long ago.

At long last I have been vindicated - and I'm not being wise after the event either (although I can be pretty good at this) - but I have long maintained that the infamous "Beast of le Gevaudan" (page seven) was a Hyena, as the contemporary description, along with details of its dentition, clearly pointed to this. This animal caused such terror over such a wide area that the French government sent an official military mission down to the area on a 'search and destroy' operation. Incidentally, I was astounded to learn that, so far, the species hasn't been decided upon, as the three species of Hyena are all so different from each other I should have thought identification would have taken about three seconds flat. I wonder, I wonder, dare I suggest that it might have been the striped species, as this is the one least inclined to scavenge and more likely to kill its prey!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Full marks Clin! Karl Shuker confirmed in the October issue of *Fortean Times* that the skin was indeed that of a striped hyena. I have always been of the suspicion that whereas (as has been proved to be the case) the Le Gevaudan creature had its basis in a real live animal, that not even the most voracious hyena could have killed and eaten as many children as this one is said to have done. I have a sneaking suspicion, therefore, that there was another predator at large in that part of France at the same time ... probably a bipedal one with disturbing paedophilic and homicidal tendencies.

No, sorry - the story of the Duke of Wellington and the Sparrow Hawk (*Accipiter nisus*) - on page nine - has contrived to get a bit garbled. When the Crystal Palace was being glazed in 1851 it was discovered that many house sparrows were living in the large trees within the building, so Queen Victoria, fearing that they might turn out to be a

nuisance, asked the Duke, (on whom she always relied in times of crisis), what ought to be done. "Sparrow Hawks, Ma'am", was his damned silly and totally unpractical reply.

Regarding the 'Political Correctness Police' mentioned by "Mungo Park" on page eleven, this brings up an interesting instance of double standards. Political correctness is an utter and absolute embargo on the freedom of speech - yet 'freedom of speech' was one of the favourite cliches of the red raggars who instituted P.C. in the first place. Surely they can't have it both ways - or perhaps they can, as they are always right. I always say, by the way, that I am an oasis in a desert of political correctness. Or if you want to put it another way, I'm so reactionary, I'm nearly radical!

Talking about MUNGO PARK, it isn't generally known that this intrepid Scots physician/explorer travelled extensively through West Africa - "that Turkish Bath provided by nature", as it has aptly been described - clad in frock coat and top hat, just as though he'd been strolling down Edinburgh's Claremont Street.

The article "The Dragons of Yorkshire" (pages fourteen to twenty) was interesting and well, indeed painstakingly researched - BUT has such material really a place in the all too few pages of 'Animals & Men'? Eighty percent of it dealt with mythology, or at least as I saw it, it did - and this is a very different subject from Cryptozoology!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Whils it is true that this magazine is most usually devoted to cryptozoology it has always been editorial policy to include elements of forteana, zoomythology (like Richard Freeman's a cicle on dragons), fringe zoology, and indeed anything else that takes our fancy. However the whole editorial team would like to shout a resounding 'hoorah' in support of Clin's views about so-called Political Correctness. The editorial team includes some of the least politically correct people one could ever hope to meet!

"When the wolf was at large up north" (page twenty-two), clearly refers to the famous Allendale Wolf that caused so much damage to farmstock before it was accidentally killed on a railway line early this century. There are two fascinating points here:

a. The animal escaped from the zoological garden attached to Shotley Junction railway station in County Durham; believe it or do the other thing, but the Station Master was a keen naturalist who kept an extensive collection of animals, and as

passengers often had to wait for quite long periods at the junction, he allowed them to see his stock to alleviate their boredom! (Incidentally, and I feel extremely strongly about this, note well that I say RAILWAY station; it I had my way calling such a place a TRAIN station would be a punishable offence).

b. Here is a real mystery. When the said wolf was killed it was realised that it couldn't have been the one that got out a few months earlier, as that had been an adult animal, whereas this one was considerably younger. So work that one out if you can....

On page twenty-seven Gray's "Mammalian Hybrids" is mentioned - and oh, how disappointing that book is! It could be one of world importance, bearing in mind its subject, and one that I could well use and refer to and acknowledge in my work, but most of its entries are so tantalisingly brief even vague in some cases - that I've found it to be of little real value.

Now, what is one to make of "Big Cat Reports from Scotland" - seven solid columns of them taking up pages twenty-eight to thirty-one? Simply, very simply indeed, from the evidence available, that the Galloway region of Scotland is heaving with 'em. QED. So let's go back to page four where there are other such sightings, which combine to make me reiterate my perpetual cry of "Why, just why, do I never see the big cats with which the country is seemingly infested?"

Y'know, looking back, I can see that there are a couple of points earlier on that I'd overlooked, so here they are...

The mention of albinos on page six reminds me that in the excellent little Mansfield Museum in that not particularly congenial little town's Leeming Street, there's a section devoted to mounted albinos, including such likely species as Green Woodpecker and Waterhen, and there's another good section along the same lines at the superb Rothschild's Museum at Tring in Hertfordshire. Talking of Albinos, here's a good talking point to bring up at your next dinner party. Question - which English King was an albino? Answer - Edward the Confessor, the founder of Westminster Abbey!

On the same page there's some typical waffle from Leeds University about Gerbils (I PRESUME they mean the Mongolian Gerbil), pining and displaying grief when taken from their mates. Now, I began keeping that species back in 1968 (how the shadows are closing in...) so I suppose I was one of the first private individuals in the country to own them, and

the first private individuals in the country to own them, and I can categorically state, as a firm believer in keeping notes and records, that I have never noted unhappiness in these animals under such conditions. Query: can you tell if a Gerbil is showing "symptoms of Loss"? -because I can't. Far more interesting is the fact that the Mongolian Gerbil was discovered by the famous Pere David, who also "discover d" (if that's the right term in this context) the Giant Panda and the D er named after him. To go back to my mention of the Himalayas when talking about the Jungle Cat (you'll soon see the connection when I mention Mount Everest) - plus my firm conviction (which, I know, irritates some people) that there is no knowledge that is not valuable. Ask almost anyone you like the height of that said mountain, and the chances are they'll reply "29,000 feet" - but it ain't. In fact, although its summit is admittedly that height above sea-level, its a modest 7,000 feet as a mountain, which just happens to be sited on high ground.

Here's to our next merry meeting...

As is his custom Neil Nixon presents another selection from that wholly mythical compilation album:

NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL CRYPTO

Stan Freburg meets the
Abominable Snowman

Around about the time that most of today's middle aged monster fans were taking a torch under the bedclothes, and most of us just basically weren't, comedian, writer and purveyor of musical slaughter Stan Freburg was plying his trade on radio and on record. Freburg's comedy was a fast moving slapstick; mainstream in its reference points but still strong on vivid images and solid ideas. As part of his radio series Stan 'interviewed' the Abominable Snowman, discovering in the process that his subject was not a "gentleman" or a "creature" but "a little bit of each actually". He wore size 23 sneakers and stated that his work was to "terrorise the mountain climbers that come up here. That is my trade and I'm proud of it". Declaring him self to be an impressive ten and a half feet tall, the Snowman told Stan:

"If you think I'm tall, you should meet my brother, he jumped centre for Abominable State".

As comedy it works well, thanks mainly to Freburg's assured delivery and timing. As a sn ak glimpse into crypto imagery it shows how far the world - and especially the USA - has come in forty years. In Freburg's world middle America laughed at a creature that was essentially a mutated middle American. These days Mulder and Scully struggle to understand layers of reality and barely hold on to their American ideals in the process. Sighted more rarely than the Thorganby Lion Freburg's gem did appear on the Capitol/EMI compilation LP : "Best of the Stan Freburg Shows".

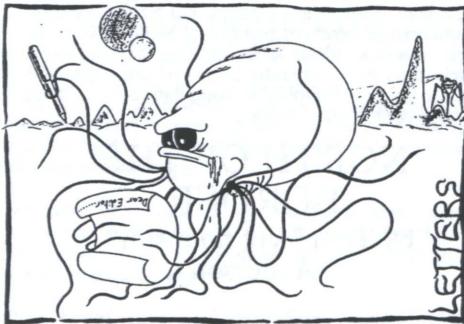
NORTH OF THE BORDER

by Tom "wot no insult?"
Anderson

It is to be hoped that the recent spate of animal mutilations nationwide has peaked, reports of little girl's ponies having nails hammered into them having receded since the spring. This decline has been variously reported as being due to the limited number of 'neanderthals' likely to engage in the pastime, the effects of the rural "Farm Watch" scheme and the perpetrators having such a limited attention span, most were one-offs. We now have an upsurge in rabbit strangling and the rapid growth of setting fire to and shooting cats with airguns, crossbows and ball bearings. This is a national problem, but Scotland seems to have a localised variation on the theme.

From the borders to the highlands, since the start of the year, there has been an epidemic of cats, (usually kittens) found crucified to trees, barn doors etc. There is no evidence of ritual or ceremonial, only the act itself, a life-form graffiti unique up here in its volume at least. As the "Shit for Brains" subculture seems to be targetting domestic animals, it could prove useful to hypothesise on future victims and take appropriate pre-emptive action. Ostrich farmers would seem to be safe, but cage birds could be taught to shriek "Sod Off Pinhead" and ring their bell at some volume. Plastic herons at garden ponds could be replaced by live maribous and pit vipers utilised as draught excluders behind closed doors. Any miscreant caught with a Stanley knife after dark would be tethered face down across the buttocks of a cow in oestrus. This should prevent any possible recidivism!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We welcome letters on any subject of interest to readers of this magazine, although we reserve the right to edit and omit where appropriate (or in the case of Tom Anderson, we reserve the right to add a string of completely unwarranted slurs on his character and dodgy innuendoes). Opinions expressed are those of the individual writer and not necessarily those of the Editor or his band of merrie men (and women). Every effort has been made not to infringe anyone's copyright, and libellous comments are always removed (unless they are funny enough). As the Editorial team haven't got any money anyway, even if we have libelled you its probably useless suing us!

INCONSISTENT DRAGON

Dear Jonathan,

Whilst reading the article "The Dragons of Yorkshire" by Richard Freeman in *Animals & Men* issue 14, I noticed an inconsistency.

In the section entitled 'Sea Dragons', the account

of Filey coastguard Wilkinson Herbert states that the neck was "rearing up three feet high". Later the neck is described as being a "yard around".

It occurred to me that these would be strange measurements for the neck of a supposed sea-serpent.

I looked up the account in another publication "There are Giants in the Sea" by Michael Bright (Robson Books 1989). In his version of the coastguard's account, the creature's neck reared up eight feet high, not the three feet that Richard Freeman stated.

As neither of these authors gave any reference of where these accounts came from I was initially unable to check which of the neck measurements was correct.

I suspected that the eight foot neck was more likely for a creature with a neck circumference of three feet.

I recently obtained a copy of Bernard Heuvelmans's "In the Wake of the Sea Serpents" (Rupert Hart Davis 1968), which confirmed that the eight foot neck measurement was the correct one, and gave the information that the report was originally published in the *Daily Telegraph* on the 1st March 1934.

Yours sincerely,

Brian J. Godwin
Cumbria.

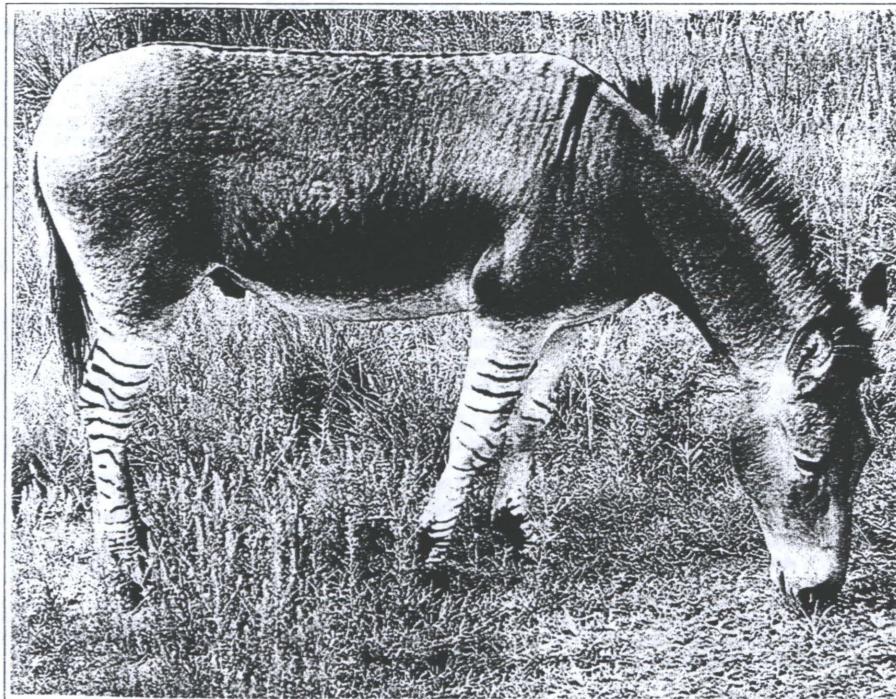
STOP HORSING ABOUT

Dear Jon,

Whilst thoroughly enjoying *Animals & Men* number 14, I feel that I must comment on the picture of the zebra/donkey cross that was reproduced on page five. Although from its appearance there is little doubt about its parentage, it is rather unfortunate that the Newsfile comment states that it looks like a Quagga.

Those readers who have studied the quagga, or who have read David Barnaby's book "Quaggas and Other Zebras" (Bassett Publications 1996), a book which I had the pleasure of editing, will realise that the animal, other than being an Equid has not a lot of similarity with the Quagga!

The Quagga had more definite body stripes starting at the spine, but usually failing to complete the



circuitous route around the body; the legs though were unstriped. One of Reinhold Rau's major concerns in the Quagga 'rebreeding' project is to get rid of the stripes on the leg, and to replace them with a brown background colour. Because of the stripes on the legs alone, the hybrid currently residing in Leominster would not be allowed anywhere near the Quagga Project zebras!

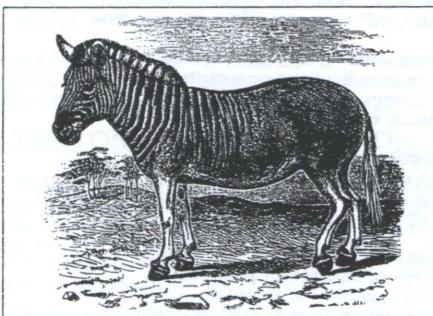
'Animals & Men' is not alone in this mistake though, the Daily Telegraph on the 25th September had an article on the Quagga Project and included a photograph of the same zebra/donkey hybrid, or one of it's contemporaries, suggesting that it was one of the Quagga Project Zebras.

With best wishes,

Chris Moiser,
Plymouth.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ooops! Chris is, of course, quite right. As illustration compare the 19th

Century engraving of the quagga used to illustrate Chris's article in *Animals & Men* several years ago with the contentious picture from the *Daily Telegraph* supplied by those jolly nice chaps at the Copyright Liberation Front.



FEET OF CLAY?

Dear Jon,

So Mark Chorvinsky thinks that 'Doc' Shiels faked the Morgawr and Nessie photos with modelling clay. If this is the case then it surely means that long necked lake monsters are genuine prehistoric survivors from the 'Plasticene Era'.

By the way, re. A&M 13. I'm not into Anne Rice and I'm not particularly into vampires except for real ones (a la Highgate and St. Leonards). Anyhow, dragons are much more interesting. But if you know any goth babes who want to bite my neck that's a different story!

Love

Richard Freeman,
Underneath the arches at Kings Cross.

ER ANOTHER POEM.

'Neath a moon of sickly pallor
Upstream of the fabled Exe
A coven vile of beings strange
Whose nightly deeds doth man perplex,

Eldritch forces drive them onwards
Females with revealing shifts on
Males, blank-eyed and incoherent
torn from the Arms of Clifton.

No incubas or chupacabras
no goat legged god on grisly throne
can impede their grim procession
Obesience at the Court of Holne.

From its battlements a night-bird screeches
the hour being twelve and ten,
their knock answered by roar so bestial
"Our Lord", they cry, "He's pissed again!"

Aflush with Tesco's finest vintage
his mind with obscure concepts grapples
mutterings of "He's finally lost it"
seduced by ill fermented apples

Adopting then benign composure
with unctuous charm he proffers greetings
Hors d'oeuvres (one bag crisps, two pickles),
- a dreaded Editorial Meeting.

From scholarly to downright weird
a range of talents they presented
but almost without exception
all present there were half demented.

Fro Drake's old port an academic
at a loss to understand,
his presence at this Bacchanalia
instead of sciving Gambian sand.

A delegate from far off Ga 1,
with piscine theories thought bizarre,
our forefathers, it seems were kippers
Yes, you've guessed it - F.de Sarre.

One of the few who've seen a mermaid,
though others search both far and frantic,
but never have brought home the bacon
like the enigmatic poet Scandic.

Garey Larsen I am not,
in fact I have produced some bummers,
how galling then to be upstaged,
by a youth of so few summers.

White-faced, the man from Guildford rises,
a traditional mammal, fish and fowl man.
Quoth he: "my life has been for naught,
last night I saw that bloody owl an".

Stunned by this news, the Ed. goes limp,
his fag end falls on cloak with stars on,
with Buckfast Sally puts it out,
there's no arson about with Parsons.

A late arrival fresh from Bristol,
where the MAFF consider him a snooper,
to spare his blushes I'll not name him,
but it rhymes with jackal pooper-scooper.

But where's the rest? I hear you wonder,
to be precise the famed Doc Shuker
then spake the Ed. "he 'phoned last night,
he lies abed with a Verruca".

Eyebrows raised, Ms. Williams queried,
"A new girlfriend? And no-one's seen her?"
The Ed. replies "with THAT surname,
she must be a Russian ballerina".

While most remain stunned by all this twaddle,
a dark clad figure intercedes,
all clench their teeth, their buttocks, wallets,
awaiting the onslaught from Leeds.

He put his case and none demurred,
to finance his trip Antipodean,
to find the fabled Thylacine,
for was he not the Dick called Freeman?

Blearily the Ed. then focussed
and uttered as a born leader
"You've got more chance wiv the lottery mate,

I've got to upgrade my Amiga".

Apologies to Graham, Richard, Lisa, Tina, Alyson and sundry coelacanths, but the dreaded deadline is approaching, and another one of JD's rants.

Endangered species stand alone, quagga, dodo, beaked chelonian, luckily no shortage yet, of dire poets Caledonian.

To those not mentioned, the reason is one of the following:

You've already been vilified,
You don't rhyme,
You are a hologram and automatically disqualified,
I've never really liked you,
All your biographical details were supplied by Jon and reflect badly on your literary abilities and personal hygiene.

You know who you are.

See you in court,

Tom Anderson,
Aberdeen.

EDITOR'S NOTE: At the risk of this being described by Aberdeen's Mr Entertainment as "Another one of J.D.'s rants" I have to apologise to him for revealing in print that he was the author of the poem in the last issue when he signed the poem 'Anon'.

However, as everyone he libelled last time thought that it was vastly amusing no harm was done and he has admitted liability for the above musings.

By the way, the libels perpetrated above are totally wrong. The Editorial Meeting that has produced this issue comprised purely of me and Graham, (and sundry other folk down the telephone), we were drinking wine not cider, and we were listening to Hawkwind on Samhain 1997. It seems appropriate.

For the third time this issue I am running a competition. I am offering a free lifetime's subscription to Animals & Men to the author of the most obscene (but printable) limerick that anyone can compose about (you've guessed it) TOM ANDERSON!

BOOK REVIEWS



By Jonathan Downes unless otherwise stated

FAIRIES - Real Encounters with Little People by Janet Bord (Michael O'Mara Books, London, 1997)
ISBN 1-85479-698-4
Indexed. £16.99

*Up the airy mountain,
Down the Rushy Glen,
We daren't go a hunting,
For fear of Little men. (William Allingham)*

Most Fortean Zoologists would probably regard fairies as being outside their zone of investigation. Nevertheless tiny hominoids have been believed in and seen by many 'normal' people, worldwide, over the centuries. I don't mean pretty picturebook sprites of the Cottingley kind, but the more potent 'Little People' of folk tradition. As Kipling's Puck

was heard to say:

"Can you wonder that the People of the Hills don't care to be confused with that painty-winged, wand-waving, sugar-and-shake-your-head set of imposters?"

If there is a Bigfoot, then why not a Smallfoot? Size seems to matter so much to some chaps. It is as if the existence of the Mandrill should cancel out that of the Marmoset. Some 'Little People' could actually BE little people; the majority, however, must be viewed as supernatural beings.

Fairies (goblins, elves, brownies, pixies, leprechauns, spriggans and so on) - objective or otherwise - are still encountered. In recent years some ufologists have pointed out the often striking similarities between fairy lore and reports of UFO entities ('little green men' for instance). Abduction by aliens can be seen as a modern variation on the trip-to-Fairyland theme; an 'otherworld' experience.

Janet Bord's book covers many aspects of a complex and fascinating subject which she treats in a soundly Fortean way, building on the work of Evans Wentz, Lewis Spence, Katherine Briggs, and others. Janet knows that tales of fairies should not always be regarded as 'mere' fairytales.

I recommend this book as an excellent primer for those readers who are not just interested in mystery animals but also mysterious little men. Tony 'Doc' Shiels.

Borderlands - The Ultimate Exploration of the Unknown by Mike Dash (Heinemann £16.99 501pp)

I'm always in somewhat of a dilemma when I am sent something to review which has been written or recorded by a mate. What do you do if it turns out to be dreadful? This has happened on a number of occasions, especially with CDs, and I usually end up being non-committal and evasive about the product in an attempt to get it out of the way as quickly as possible. Mike Dash is a mate of mine so I was, in theory at least, faced with the usual dilemma. I needn't have worried, however, because this book is superb. *The Borderlands* referred to in the title are very similar to *The Outer Edge* described by John Keel, and in this exhaustive work, Dash deals with a wide range of fortean and paranormal phenomena with wit, style and aplomb. The sections on UFOs, Abductions and Cryptozoology (which cites yours truly in the

references), are particularly interesting, and contain much material which is new to me. This is a concise and erudite overview of fortean research over the past 50 years or more, and as such cannot be recommended highly enough.

Remember Belle Vue by C.H.Keeling (Clam Publications, 13 Pound Place, Shalford, Nr Guildford, Surrey) ISBN 1-874795-15-0

Clinton Keeling is a remarkable man, and I ain't just saying that because he is a regular contributor to this august journal where his healthy brand of scepticism is most welcome, but as I have said on a number of occasions, he has forgotten more about animals and their husbandry than most of us will ever know, and after half a century or so in the business he is still going strong.

He is also one of the foremost zoo historians in the UK if not the world, and this fascinating volume (the third that he has written about Manchester's ill fated zoological gardens) is full of fascinating scraps of information, and even more fascinating illustrations. This book cannot be recommended highly enough!

Walks in Mysterious Devon by Trevor Beer (Sigma Press £6.95) ISBN 1-85058-607-1

This excellent little book features twenty-eight different books around rural Devonshire, most of which have fascinating links to folklore and forteana. The fortean zoologist will be intrigued by accounts of spectral black dogs, rogue wolverines (which Trevor Beer claims here to have seen himself), and of course, the notorious Beast of Exmoor - the quasi-cryptid with which Trevor Beer is most widely linked. Excellent!

Louis S B Leakey - Beyond the Evidence. Martin Pickford. Janus, London 1997. ISBN 1 85756 396 4 £12 164pp
Publication date: 1/12/97.

"It is difficult," says Pickford, *"to find a parallel in the scientific world where so much garbage has been spoken by so few for so long."*

It is the "few" who are chastised here, and not the

mainstream, so it might seem that the march of science has not been hindered too badly by this handful of rotters.

His book examines paleoanthropology between 1926 and 1972 and criticises excavation technique, geological assumptions, correlation of evidence and the persistence of unwarranted assumptions.

Topics covered include the Pliocene drought, Oldoway Man, the Kanam jaw, Ngira Man and Kanjera Man. There is no index.

Pickford apportions blame freely throughout the book, mainly (as the title of the book suggests), in the direction of Louis Leakey - and his son Richard, who "kept up the family tradition concerning fossils themselves, principally by claiming that they were older than they were...."

I'm not surprised. The phrase "*I want to be alive*", deriving as it does from the world of Ufology that is so despised by many "reputable" scientists, pervades much of science - where careers and research grants can depend so much upon having faith in current bandwagons and schools of thought. GI

Kaptan June and the Turtles by June Haimoff. (Janus, London 1997.) ISBN 1 85756 229 1. £8.95 130pp

This is the true story of one person's fight to save the *Caretta caretta* turtle's Turkish beach - Dalyan - from tourist development.

Written in relaxed and chatty autobiographical style, it describes how June stayed there and made some friends; watched the turtles; how beach huts began springing up on and near the beach; her encounters with the authorities; the sounds of dynamite blasting signalled road construction; and the arrival of the cement mixers while discussions were still under way to make the beach a Special Protection Area.

David Bellamy, who visited the beach with a BBC documentary team, says in the foreword:

"Please read this book and then, like Kaptan June and all the other caring people recorded in it, join the fight to save the living world upon which we all depend." GI

The Unexplained - The Ultimate Gateway to the World of the Unknown. Ed: John and Anne Spencer. (Simon & Schuster, Sydney 1997). ISBN 0-684-81985-6 £20 192pp large format.

A brief run-down on just about all mysterious or unexplained phenomena one can imagine. None of the 300 or so items are in depth - it's breadth that's the point of this book. Hence 'gateway' in the title: it's not a reference tool, and doesn't have an index. Heavily illustrated, generally with two pictures on each page (most in colour). Topics range from underground lightning, auras and Kirlian electrophotography, sky cities, phantom ships, frog falls, hypnosis, precognition, black holes, crop circles, voodoo, Nessie, ghosts, and phone calls from the dead. A good present for the kids? GI

PERIODICAL REVIEWS

By Graham Inglis

The "new kid on the block" this time is Mystery Magazine and very good it is, too.

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Apart from the physical appearance of the text (large font italics) this is a well presented and uncluttered mag, starting with an informative contents page - with 'tasters' for each item.

There's a 'weird news' section and an interview with astronaut Gordon Cooper (who flew on two pre-Apollo missions) in which he gives his views on Roswell and whether any UFOs are alien craft. There's also an investigation of Spring-heeled Jack, panther sightings in the Sheffield area, and - here's something cute - a page of weird stories from very old newspapers (one's dated 1718). The cryptozoology page (to be a regular feature?) is by David Colman of S.U.P.R. on big cat sightings in Scotland.

I like this mag and I hope it doesn't fade away.

48a Bridge Street, Kilmarnock, Derbyshire, S21 1BS. A4 Quarterly: £2 each. Side-stapled A4 24pp.

COVER-UP A4 16pp

S.U.P.R. (Scottish Unexplained Phenomena Research) mag. In issue 8 (Sep 97) David Colman battles his way through internecine ettiness amongst Scottish ufologists to include articles about UFO sightings (mainly in Fife) and to review a book, "The Bible Code" which claims that predictions of the future are embedded in Genesis. Cover-Up doesn't pull its punches, sometimes. An article about child abductions commences thus: *"Sightings is a news-stand magazine not greatly troubled by any search for objective evidence to support its claims..."*

David Colman, 39 Limefield Crescent, Bathgate, West Lothian, EH48 1RF, Scotland. £1.25

CRYPTONEWS near-A4 14pp

This newsletter of the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club (BCSCC) is, in their less-than-modest words, "one of the most desirable cryptozoological publications available" and is "professionally produced and well-thought out". There is something distinctly un-English about such remarks: if true, then they should be self-evident.

The articles are well written but the lack of a contents page, and the concealment of subscription rates on p14 under a caption saying "Nessie" do strike me as rather odd.

Issue 29 adopts a decidedly watery theme as it includes items on a Turkish lake monster (in ake Van), Caddy, Ogopogo, some Loch Ness caverns, and Lake Dakatau's Migo (explained as a convoy of crocodiles). On dry land there's the Yeti and the Thylacine (Tasmanian tiger).

BCSCC, Unit #89, 6141 Willingdon Ave, Burnaby, BC, V5H 2T9, Canada. Membership: \$10 (US or Canadian)

THE DRAGON CHRONICLE

Anyone fascinated by or interested in dragons will, I believe, find this mag a real delight, packed with articles on dragon mythology, cultural influence and portrayal, artwork, links with ancient fossils, poetry, and adverts and services aimed at catering for dragon enthusiasts everywhere.

P O Box 3369, London, SW6 6JN. A4 44pp. Issue 11 (Sep 97) is out now.

Issues cost £2 (\$5) from Jan 98; a 4-issue sub is £7 (\$15) - but note the mag appears 3 times a year.

SIGHTINGS

(a.k.a. FRO BEYOND in the USA)

Issue 18 (Nov 97) includes an interview with Derrel Sims (by Jonathan Downes) on the subject of alien implants, which Sims claims to have surgically removed from various abductees. He (Jonathan, that is) also penned an article on the recent wave of sightings of unidentified phenomena in Devon.

There's the usual regular columns and reviews and news, too.

A 'news-stand' magazine: ISSN 1363-5166.
Published by Rapide, Roman Court, 48 New North Road, Exeter, Devon.

HERP LIFE A4 4pp

The newsletter of the South Western Herpetological Society, England. The September issue reviews Brian Eady's society lecture on tortoises he'd seen in Turkey - or sometimes not seen - thanks to construction work for the benefit of tourists... The newsletter also includes member's ads.

Info: Karen Tucker, 14 Shrubbery Close, Newport, Barnstaple, Devon, EX32 9DG

TORTOISE TRUST NEWSLETTER

Various news and features covering welfare, conservation, captive breeding and research.

ISSN 0963-9411. Info from:
Tortoise Trust, BM Tortoise, London, WC1N 3XX.

MAINLY ABOUT ANIMALS

Veteran zoologist (but not cryptozoologist - see Clinton's Cogitations in this issue) Clinton Keeling edits this A5 magazine. The latest issue features the first part of an article on mystery eagles by Darren Naish.

13 Pound Place, Shalford, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 8HH.
Subscription £5 per year.

CRYPTOZOOLOGIA A4 20pp

The French language magazine of the Association for the Protection of Rare Animals, Brussels.

Square des Latins 49/4, B-1050 Bruxelles, Belgium

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

In the autumn of 1996 the CFZ announced the availability of the new Yearbook a mite prematurely, as circumstances (some of which should have been allowed for) conspired to delay its launch by about 4 extra months.

This time around, things are a lot better organised. Not perfect, but certainly better. The 1998 Yearbook is already in an advanced state of preparation and will be available before Christmas!

As will two books by Tony Shiels! Details of our "Winter Catalogue" follow....

(Please make all cheques payable to Jonathan Downes)

The 1998 YEARBOOK OF THE CENTRE FOR FORTEAN ZOOLOGY

Neil Arnold - more cryptozoological movies

Darren Naish - brontosaurs

Michael Playfair - A-Z of monster-haunted lakes

Jonathan Downes - Mystery Kangaroos

Richard Muirhead - Strange snakes

Darren Naish - Ichthyosaurs

Chris Moiser - Nyaminyami *

Mike Grayson - The fortean fauna of Percy Fawcett
(the legendary Amazonian explorer)

Tom Anderson - Native American totem beasts
Richard Freeman - Giant crocodiles

...and much more!

* If you didn't know that this is the water god of the Kariba Dam, Zimbabwe, then you clearly are urgently in need of the Yearbook 1998!

Available soon from the CFZ for £10 -
plus 75p p&p (UK) or £1 (overseas)

THIRTEEN! by Tony Shiels

A reissue of Tony's 1967 guide to
13 spooky and atmospheric tricks...

Available soon from the CFZ: £4 -
plus 25p p&p UK and 50p overseas.

13

Available soon from the CFZ: £8 -
plus 70p p&p (UK) or £1 (overseas)

OUR OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Morgawr: The Monster of Falmouth Bay by A. Mawman-Peller.

Now with a new introduction by Tony 'Doc' Shiels and an additional essay by Jonathan Downes, this seminal 1976 booklet is finally available again complete with a ridiculous cover. £ 1.50

The Smaller Mystery Carnivores of the Westcountry by Jonathan Downes.

Over a hundred pages of information on a range of small carnivores in this fascinating region of the British Isles.

Three species thought extinct, and tantalising hints of several species apparently new to science are detailed along with a revolutionary suggestion that a species of mammal known from mainland Europe also exists on these islands. Many illustrations. £ 7.50

The Owlman and Others
by Jonathan Downes.

For the last twenty years girls and young women visiting Mawman Old Church in southern Cornwall have reported sightings of a four to five foot tall humanoid creature covered in feathers.

This book discusses two decades of owlman evidence in meticulous detail and comes about as close as anyone ever will to the truth. Many illustrations. £ 10.00

The CFZ Yearbook 1996.

The first of our annual 'yearbooks' with nearly two hundred pages of research papers and longer articles. Karl Shuker writes about Sky Beasts, Jon Downes writes about mystery eagles, Richard Muirhead examines the flying snake of Namibia, and we even reprint the seminal Tony 'Doc' Shiels article *'The Nudification of Ness'*. Francois de Sarre examines African Man Beasts, and Neil Arnold looks at the Loch Ness Monster. There is also plenty more and many illustrations. £ 12.00

The CFZ Yearbook 1997.

Another dose of cryptozoology, zoomythology and high strangeness. Francois de Sarre claims that humans are descended from bipedal fish, Rafael A Lara Palmeros discusses cattle mutilation in Mexico and hunts for the Chupacabras, Karl Shuker goes in search of anomalous aardvarks and the big grey man of Ben McDhui and Darren Naish (figuratively) takes a hatchet to the monster of Lake Dakataua. Tom Anderson examines the pros and cons of reintroducing extinct mammal species to Scotland, and Michael Playfair provides an ammonated list of cryptozoological movies. As always there is much more and many illustrations. £ 12.00

SPECIAL OFFER

We have strictly limited stocks of
Dr Karl Shuker's excellent new
book :

FROM FLYING TOADS TO SNAKES WITH WINGS

Which has only been published in the United States.

£10.99
+ 75p p&p

OUR OWN PUBLICATIONS

ANIMALS AND MEN

BACK ISSUES: £2

Back issues of "Animals & Men" are available at £2 each from the editorial address. Please see "methods of payment" below.

As well as the main features detailed below, all issues of "Animals & Men" have a "Newsfile" section and letters, reviews and other shorter pieces....

Issue

- 1 Relict Pine Martens, Giant Sloths, Sumatran and Javan Rhinos, Golden Frogs, Frog Falls.
- 2 Mystery bears in Oxford and The Atlas Mountains, Loch Ness reports, Green Lizards, Woodwose, The Tatzelwurm.
- 3 Giant Worm in Eastbourne, Lake Monsters of New Guinea, Giant Lizards in Papua, Mystery Cats, Black Dogs on Dartmoor, Scorpion Mystery
- 4 Manatees of St Helena, Migo: The Lake Monster of New Britain, The search for the Tasmania Thylacine
- 5 Mystery cats, Loch Ness, More on the "Migo Video", Boars and Pumas, The Hairy Hands of Dartmoor.
- 6 The Owlman Special; also the Humped Elephants of Nepal, Mystery Cats Sabre-toothed cats, Mysterious hominids of Africa, The British Nandi Bear?, Bibliography of Cryptozoology books pt 1 (Shuker)
- 7 Mystery Whales, Strangeness in Scotland, On collecting a cryptid, Bodmin Leopard Skull, Bibliography of "Crypto" Books (Shuker) pt 2.
- 8 Green Cats and Dogs, Mystery Whales, Quagga Project, Bibliography of Cryptozoological books (3rd & concluding pt), Malayan Man Beast.
- 9 Hong Kong Tiger, Horseman of Lincolnshire, Scottish BHM, Congo Peacock, Mystery whales.
- 10 Mystery Moth of Madagascar, Bengal Leopard Cats, The Derry, Wild Boars in Kent, a new Irish lake monster, mystery whales and the truth about the Essex Beach Corpses.
- 11 The "Walruses Special", also Feathered Dinosaurs, Ground Sloth Survival in North

America, Mystery Whales, Initial Bipedalism

- 12 Lions: The Barbary Lion, etc, More Feathered Dinosaurs, Chinese Crabs in the Thames, Mystery Animals of Germany, News from New Zealand.
- 13 Pangolins; also Moby the Sperm Whale, Barking Beast of Bath, Yorkshire ABCs, Molly the Singing Oyster, Leatherback Turtles, Walruses
- 14 The Dragons of Yorkshire, Irish mystery animals, In Search Of "Gambo", Charlie Fort and the Vampire Sheep Slayer - and Jackals, and the first of Clinton's Cogitations..

THE GOBLIN UNIVERSE

BACK ISSUES: £2 each

The sister mag to *Animals & Men* - it's the parish magazine of the outer edge!

Issues 4, 5 & 6 are available from the editorial address. Please see "methods of payment" below.

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